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WHAT AND WHY IS MAN?

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TORONTO

WHAT AND WHY IS MAN?

BY

RICHARD LA RUE SWAIN, PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "WHAT AND WHERE IS GOD?" ETC.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY

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IN GRATEFUL MEMORY
OF MY BELOVED WIFE,
ANNA SHUEY SWAIN

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FOREWORD

A pen-written letter by the hand of Lyman Abbott, suggesting this volume and containing his reasons why such a book should be written is printed below. Besides serving as a "Foreword" to the book, it will give Dr. Abbott's friends pleasure, now that he is gone, to get this additional glimpse into his mind and heart.

404 West 116th St., N. Y. City.
6th Feb., 1921.

My dear Dr. Swain:

I presume that you see the *Outlook,* and therefore will have seen my review of your book in this week's issue (Feb. 9). If not, let me know, and I will see that a copy is sent to you.

I should like to see you follow it with another on a cognate theme.

There are two fundamental teachings of the Bible which need elevating and emphasizing in our material and Epicurean age. One that God made man in his own image, that we are his offspring, not merely his creatures, and therefore it is in man we are to look for the image

of God. This truth you have brought out with great clearness in your volume. It is because Burroughs imagines that we are to look through nature to nature's God that he presents such a curiously self-contradictory philosophy in his book—"Accepting the Universe."

The other teaching is that the end of life is life itself. Therefore it is that Christ says he came to give life and give it more abundantly; and that his life here and his heaven hereafter is "eternal life." What Paul calls "the life that really is." But Burroughs and his school —indeed, all the materialistic school—assume that the object of love should be to confer happiness. That is a mistake. It should be to confer life. And it is a fatal mistake. It lands us inevitably in the Buddhist's Nirvana—unconscious existence;—or in the Mahomedan's Paradise,—a kind of celestial Paris; or in the pig philosophy which Carlyle has so keenly satirized. What noble nature would wish to be robbed of the capacity to suffer. It endows us with at least three cardinal virtues—courage, patience, and pity or compassion. Yes! and with piety, too; for we never draw so near to God as when suffering drives us to the Great Comforter.

If this subject grips you, you could follow your volume on "What and Where Is God?"

with one on "What Is Life?", which philosophy the Church and especially our young people greatly need.

Yours sincerely,

LYMAN ABBOTT.

PREFACE

What and Why Is Man? is meant to be a companion volume to *What and Where Is God?* Each volume widely and vitally supplements the other.

Dr. Lyman Abbott was the first one to suggest that I write on this "cognate" theme. The publishers, likewise, requested me to write this volume and to keep it, like *What and Where Is God?,* in the realm of experience.

Therefore, I have undertaken to give very *human* answers to perplexing questions that are universally being asked concerning (1) human origin, (2) human birth, (3) human struggle, (4) human destiny, and (5) God's relation thereto.

What is everything all about? Is it possible to think well of things and to take hold with a strong and cheerful hand?

Is it "through *nature* to God?" Or "through *man* to God?" Some writers take the former road, some the latter. But in my opinion, it is very necessary to take both roads; and, what is equally important, to look through *God* for the image of the true man and for the true significance of nature. To see things whole, every available viewpoint must be frequently used.

It is reason for regret that the manuscript had to go

to the publishers before there was time for it to be read by some theological expert; but as the purpose of the book was to record with accuracy the things which I certainly believe and which, with too much failure, I endeavor to practise, the lack of such a reading is not as important as it would have been had I been assuming to present with accuracy the views current among scholars. But I must thank with heartfelt gratitude the publishers: First, for asking me to write the book; and, second, for offering very many invaluable suggestions in the final preparation of the manuscript.

To make the reading of the book easier and therefore, more enjoyable to the average person, the publishers asked for the privilege of breaking up the paragraphs into small sections. This extra labor and expense by them will, doubtless, be appreciated by many. The author's paragraphs are indicated by the paragraph sign.

R. L. S.

Locust Lodge,
Route 1, Box 11,
Bridgeport, Conn.

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WHAT AND WHY IS MAN?

CHAPTER I

"WHO MADE GOD?"

Was ever anything made out of nothing?
Is the visible universe a part of God?
Are the attributes of God identified with the visible universe?

¶ To start this volume with "Who made the Maker?" gives us the strategic advantage of commencing at the very beginning and of paving the way for all that follows.

¶ A six-year-old boy continued to perplex his mother by asking her who made God until finally she told him that God made Himself.

To allay his fear of me, a visitor, she explained that I was not a medicine doctor, but a doctor who knew about God.

In the morning the little fellow came to accompany me to the breakfast table, and his only words shyly spoken were, *"Did* God make Himself?"

¶ An intelligent man of sixty said to me, "It gets us nowhere to say that because we are and because the world

is, there must be a Creator; it only pushes the question back one step. Who made Him? Where did He come from? If something existed without being made, it might have been anything; it might have been the universe. What is the use of inventing a mystery to explain a mystery?"

¶ We do not believe there is a God simply because something *is,* but chiefly because of *what* it is.

My friend was right in thinking that existence is an impenetrable mystery.

How God or anything else could exist without a beginning is bewildering to us; and how anything could commence to be when there was nothing to cause it, is even more confusing.

That anything ever was at all becomes a crushing mystery if we dwell upon the thought for any length of time.

However, regardless of whether it always was, or whether it began to be, we are absolutely certain that something is.

Here, then, is our rational starting point: What is it? What is this all-inclusive *something* of which we are a part? In the consideration of this question, we may be able to "get somewhere."

1. Was Ever Anything Made Out of Nothing?

¶ Probably not; it is easier to believe that everything always existed in some latent form.

At least, it becomes more and more difficult for us to

believe that we ourselves together with our surroundings were made from nothing.

As far as observation goes, out of nothing comes nothing. Every new object is formed by the combining of elements that already exist; elements that probably always were latent in the great original, whatever that may have been.

And after new sense objects have been formed of old elements, they can escape neither from the grasp of the original nor from the influence of one another.

For better, for worse, all things hold together in concord or in discord.

2. Is the Visible Universe a Part of God?

¶ Though Christians fully believe that God lives in nature and expresses Himself through it, yet, as a rule, they stoutly contend that nature is neither God nor any part of Him.

They think that to preserve the personality of God, the separation between Him and nature must be clear-cut.

¶ Atheists naturally accept the view that nature is no part of God, and then conclude that the elemental forces have self-shaping and self-propelling tendencies that do away with all need of a God.

It is more than probable, however, that believers and skeptics are alike mistaken when they think that the universal energy, which is the substance of nature, is no part of an Almighty Being.

The atheist makes a mistake in thinking that energy

can get along without intelligence, and the Christian makes a mistake in thinking that intelligence can get along without cosmic energy.

Why should the Christian think that the intelligence of the universe is God's and that the energy of the universe is not His? Where have we learned that God is wise, but weak?

When we shear God of His stupendous cosmic energy, which takes shape in all visible forms, we divide Him into two parts; and call the invisible part God and the visible part matter. By this unfortunate division we unwittingly hide God behind Himself; we overlook the fact that God is foreground as well as background.

I greatly appreciate the Christian's fear of losing the personality of God; but the time has come when we must reëxamine the relation between God and the universe if we are to preserve His personality—which is the same thing as preserving God Himself.

While God, man, and nature are all vitally and organically related, yet this does not take away from God and man their individual personalities.

¶ Since all objects of sense may be reduced to energy, my contention is that the energy of the universe is God's very own; that His electronic energy is the warp of every material woof and the woof of every material warp.

¶ If this be so, then He lives His life before our very eyes as truly as in our souls; His intelligence is expressed in the flow of His energy in everything about us.

Therefore, we see God in essentially the same way that we see man; we see the visible projections of Him with our senses.

¶ With this thought in mind, I have stopped writing for a few minutes to take a look at that which holds me in its friendly grasp. With such chemical, biological, and philosophical knowledge as I possess, I am simply looking to see how my surroundings will affect me.

¶ That which I see is indescribably wonderful. It in nowise resembles a senseless, impersonal, dead thing; but exhibits a beautiful and purposeful activity that outruns all human imagination.

It does not appear to be something that intelligence did trillions of years ago; it has every appearance of being something that infinite Wisdom is doing at this very moment that I am looking.

God has more highly specialized instruments of expression than any that are before me at this moment, to be sure, but if what I see is not God in action, it is most certainly the way an infinite God would act if He really existed.

¶ Right before me is an overwhelming display of wisdom and energy; a display that is beyond all gifts of description.

This is a thrilling experience! Why have I not repeated it more frequently?

¶ Now, the magic of the scene is augmented and my sense of appreciation intensified by a little snow that has commenced to fall. How silent! How beautiful! Every

flake is of an exquisite mathematical design, and no two alike!

If I were a woman, I should certainly crochet a doily patterned after the magnified picture of a snowflake.

You aged, angular apple trees, inwardly a wild whirl of molecules, and outwardly, silent as eternity!

You smiling stone fence, winding around the orchard and over the hill, at once a dizzying dance of atoms and the symbol of peace and perpetual repose.

¶ Now the snow has ceased, the clouds have broken, and a new burst of glory is spread over all.

You dazzling, fiery sun, you fleecy floating clouds, you boundless stellar worlds hiding behind the effulgent light of day; you beautiful everything; from that which is so vast that a light year must be made the unit of calculation, to that which is so small that it must be magnified a thousand times to be visible at all; why are you all so charming? why so eloquent of wisdom?

Everywhere, everything, all, all is pulsating, swaying, flying, scattering blessings more numerous than snowflakes.

You dear world, why are you so appealing? so beneficent? so overpowering in your magnificent achievements?

¶ O God, the God whom our fathers have worshiped through the ages, are all these beautiful forms about me woven out of your own energy by the excellency of your wisdom and by the beauty of your love?

Is your infinite energy taking the shape of worlds at the behest of your infinite, loving will?

Is the life that I see expressing itself in the myriad forms about me the same life as that which became human and articulate in Jesus?

> Lord of all being, thron'd afar,
> Thy glory flames from sun and star;
> Centre and soul of ev'ry sphere,
> Yet to each loving heart how near.

¶ That which is directly before me does not express less, but infinitely more than the noblest creeds and philosophies of men.

As I sit here looking out upon the Great Enfolding Reality in whose boundless depths my parts once lay unshaped and from which my heart and the heart of Jesus sprang, I see wisdom, love, and energy in perfect blend.

But infinite wisdom, love, and energy are what God is; at least that is what we have been taught, and it is what I believe.

I can not think that such exact and boundless intelligence can be unconscious of itself, nor that such achievements as I behold can be wrought without a conscious, loving purpose.

¶ How wisdom, love, and energy are combined in personal consciousness, or how they are at all, I do not know; but there they are.

In a very small way, wisdom, love and energy are combined in my own self-conscious life. How, I do not know; but I know that they are.

In that respect, I seem to be a child of the universe; *I am a tiny universe* within the great universe.

We no longer postulate an absent God that we may be able to account for a universe that is no part of Him, but we think of the universe as the energy side of God Himself.

As far as I can see, after the most rigid scrutiny, energy no more exists without spiritual qualities than spiritual qualities exist apart from energy.

3. Are the Attributes of God Identified With the Visible Universe?

¶ (1) *God as Infinite Energy*—If the energy that is woven into the patterns of the universe is not directed by wisdom, then it is foreign to God and not one of His attributes.

As truly, if there is an Infinite Being, then infinite energy *must be* one of His characteristics; He could not be lacking in anything so universal and fundamental.

¶ As Christians, we have always been taught that God is just as limitless in Energy as He is in Wisdom, Love, and Will.

Our great mistake, in my opinion, has been in thinking that God made the objects about us out of nothing; instead of thinking that He made them out of His own energy which is one of His attributes. Long ago the scientists reduced the objects of sense to atoms; and now they have burst the atom into electrons.

And if they should some day succeed in disintegrating the electron, its parts would prove to be only a more subtle form of energy.

But if God's own energy is limitless, why should He need or how could He make any more energy than He now possesses?

Infinite energy is energy enough to constitute all the *forms* that we experience with our five senses.

The world of *sight* and *touch* would not differ but appear just the same whether it were composed of God's own energy or of some new energy that he made from nothing.

¶ By discovering the truer nature of the sense world, the scientists have put us in a fairer way to recognize God.

For if, as I believe, all energy is God's very own, then every discovery in dynamics is just so much more knowledge of Him; if all energy is truly His, then the objects of our senses confront us with *the energy side of God Himself.*

Even our sense organs are composed of His energy in its most highly organized and sensitized form; not only the eye, but the speck of gray matter at the end of the optic nerve.

That which is distinctively *us* is the self-communing and self-knowing spirit.

The inspired writers have beautifully and truthfully proclaimed the Almightiness of God; but since they lived before the scientists discovered that nature was not a dualism of matter and energy but only organized energy, the prophets had no means of bringing their vision down to sense fact.

My position is that the world of energy from electrons to human bodies and everything in between satisfyingly meets the requirements of a God who is exhaustless in energy; and that it shows nature to be a part of God in a deeper sense than our bodies are a part of us.

¶ (2) *God as Infinite Wisdom*—For uncountable ages before human beings made their appearance, this vast, space-filling energy was moving majestically toward our times and toward better times yet to be.

Not only was wisdom present in the movement as a whole, but every inch of the mass was crammed with a richness and complexness of meaning.

When I read scientific books, I am as much delighted and overwhelmed by the wisdom of nature as I am by its dynamics. Words are utterly inadequate to express my feelings in regard to either.

According to these books, the movements of the infinite energy are indescribably wise, beautiful, and awe-inspiring.

In the deepest sense books of science are Wisdom Books. As I scan their pages, a Supreme Wisdom appears to be manifesting itself by doing in nature just what we do when we make our invisible minds outwardly visible and tangible through our bodies by the manipulation of nature's forces.

¶ There is, however, this difference: God shapes His own energy; while we, *as dependent spirits,* live in and use His and not our own.

Such a difference is inevitable from the nature of the

case; for except as God shares His energy with us, we appear to have none.

The human mind and the tiny organism with which it is intimately connected, in comparison with the universal mind and its space-filling energy, is like a single grain of sand compared to the universe.

The grain of sand has no difficulty in finding the universe; it can not escape it.

Man, however, often fails to recognize God simply because His wisdom is too great; and because His energy, by which He expresses His wisdom, is too vast.

Until we come to recognize God as in communion with our spirits, and as a person speaking to us through Jesus and other human beings, He is too vast for our powers of comprehension.

Since His forms of expression—outside of human lives—are necessarily as rich and vast as the universe, it is not strange that we should sometimes feel confused and bewildered in such a presence.

A fellow human being doing one piece of work at a time we easily recognize, but if, like God, he were doing a trillion things at the same time, we should wonder whether he were doing any of them.

It is often most helpful to look intently at some one thing that God is doing; and yet we know that a mind that could do but one thing at a time could by no possibility be God.

¶ In other words, we want a God, and then we refuse to let Him act like one.

I often watch an organist with delight because he is working with both hands and both feet, reading both the music and the words, listening both to the organ and the choir, and judging of the effect of the whole performance upon the congregation.

But if this organist were endowed with the capacity of God, he could play the universe.

And that is just what God must do to be God.

Though we have always called Him "The Infinite," yet it now staggers us to think of God as being equal in wisdom and power to our newly discovered and rapidly expanding world.

In the past, we tossed that word "infinite" about as if it were a penny; but through the discoveries of recent science, we are beginning to get some sense of its astonishing significance.

A human being is so limited in mind and body that it is not difficult for us to know and place him as one definite being.

Besides, man expresses himself through spoken words as well as through the movements and acts of his body.

It is perfectly evident, however, that a Being who is as vast as the universe in wisdom and power could not adequately express Himself were He restricted to lips and hands.

Much as God wishes to speak with lips and serve with hands, He can not do that until His children share with Him the bodies that were designed for their joint use.

We need to know God in His vast universe, in Jesus, in the great prophets, and in the humble lives all about us.

We need to hear God both in the thunder of the heavens and in the spoken words of men.

The universe is God's full organ, human lips and human lives are the solo stops.

¶ The evidence that the universe is directed by and under the control of intelligence is overwhelming; and that fact is no more wonderful than that anything whatsoever *is* at all.

How strange it sounds to hear it said that this great universe in which we live, and upon which we have bestowed so much study, manifests a grade of intelligence below our own; especially when we court it, and strain every nerve to see what it has done in the past, what it is doing now, and what it promises to do next.

The Wisdom that directs the universe acts just as I wish and believe God to act; just as God would act if he were to act at all.

The discoveries, new and old, that have been made in the many allied sciences are so numerous that the most intelligent person has time to learn but a small portion of them.

And these discoveries on the part of man are but a revelation of the Wisdom on the part of God that is expressing itself in terms of its own energy.

¶ True, these discoveries incidentally reveal more energy present than men used to be aware of, but principally

a Wisdom that we ourselves never suspected was associated with the forces of which we were already aware.

The wonders of radio and a thousand others strengthen our faith that nature as a whole is but the expression of the most wonderful intelligence conceivable; an intelligence that is quite equal to and on a par with the energy.

Whenever we discover a new ray of energy, we are sure to discover how wisely also it acts and how nicely it dovetails in with the old and familiar forces.

It is no more strange to credit this universe with Infinite Self-consciousness than it is to identify my mind with the mass of strange things of which my body is composed.

The only reason for thinking that man has mind is the necessity for thinking that something commands this strange mass, called the body, and directs it into channels that are useful, beautiful, and beneficent.

The same reasoning holds true of the universe.

¶ The best scientific volumes, those that contain the record of actual finds in nature, are new books added to God's old Bible.

They are Wisdom Books which reveal a Wisdom that promises to be limitless and in ways that we never suspected; books that truly supplement the old Bible that has done so much for the human race.

We have long had the Old and New Testaments; but now we have broken the seals of God's great nature Volume, and the few pages that men have thus far read show it to be another Testament from God; a Third Tes-

tament that makes the verities of the Old and New Testaments appear a thousand times more wonderful than we had formerly realized.

Mr. Edison is reported to have said recently that there was some sort of intelligence present in the atom.

Certainly. Every atom is a minute combination of God's energy deputized to express His Infinite Wisdom.

The electrons dart and dance at the behest of the same purposeful Wisdom.

¶ (3) *God as Boundless Love*—The universe in its entirety betrays a pulse beat of benevolent intention at its heart as truly as it reveals energy and intelligence; it manifests a kindness beyond the measure of man's mind.

The urge of an Infinite Love seems to be fundamental; so much so that Infinite Wisdom and Energy are clearly at its service.

This is true notwithstanding the dark and discordant factors of which we shall speak in a later chapter.

The *"Absolute"* of many philosophies is endowed with no character, no worthy motive, no love; He is too frigid to be fully identified with the friendly universe, or with the kindly Jesus.

When the race of men finally allow God to complete His universe, and with their help turn it into a home where dwell love and righteousness, then the terrible things in nature that cause such dismay will either disappear entirely, or else blend in a vaster harmony.

Let love once fill the world and it will fill the world

with a beauty that charms, and with blessings that ennoble all who receive them in gratitude.

There is even now a world that draws us to itself and gives us fond delight of this kind; a world that fascinates the poets and all benevolent and seeing souls; and such a world is not cold and heartless.

It is true that some respond to its allurements but little, yet sweet singers through all the ages have fallen down and worshiped before it as before a Divine Love that weaves its gauzes, hurls its spheres, paints its landscapes, rushes its rivers to the seas, tosses its mountains in air, shapes human forms and faces, kindles human hearts, and envelopes the beautiful and kindly earth with an atmosphere that Browning calls "The clear, dear breath of God who loveth us."

The Psalmists described the Infinite as the Good Shepherd; as the Father who pities his little children when they are in trouble.

No one of us men should fail to read often the hundred and fourth Psalm.

¶ Jesus, who gazed into the universe with the purest eyes and sanest mind of all, says the Father is like the hen that gathereth her brood under her wings; He is the Beneficent Artificer in shapes and colors, of the lily that surpasses the gorgeous raiment of Solomon; His is the watchful eye that does not let a sparrow fall to the ground unnoticed; He is the considerate One who does not overlook a hair of our heads, or one of the trillion electrons that go to make one of those hairs.

How could it be otherwise if these and all objects are composed of nothing else but the forthgoings of God's own energy?

Could He use any of His energy carelessly or treat any of it unwisely?

As Saint John says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

¶ Passing by a thousand other things that reveal His love, we stop a moment to reflect on how music beats and throbs with the love of the Infinite Heart against our cold hearts to revive them; its waves of divine energy set in motion by organ and voices; a harmony of sounds that arouses devotion, awakens divine thoughts, and stimulates the will of man to push on and out and up into the great life of his Father who enfolds him in the "everlasting arms" of His Wisdom and Love.

Infinite Love put love into the heart of man, else man could not know the Great Heart. The fountain head of love is not in man.

Paul saw things in right relation and proportion: "We love God because He first loved us."

As well might we try to believe that there is no energy beyond human strength as to try to believe there is no love beyond human love.

Only those who live the life of love, know of the great streams of invading love that flow into the hearts of the Marys, Pauls, Saint Johns, and Savonarolas.

What the love of the Father was to Jesus can only be estimated rightly by the enormous sacrifices which He made for the love of God and men: "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." "It is finished; into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

The love that is greater and deeper than our own, does not hide Itself from men.

If it be not visible, the explanation is that we have shut our eyes to it.

¶ (4) *God as Infinite Will*—A great purpose runs through the universe. "There is a Power not ourselves that works for righteousness." "There is a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may."

Compare our present surroundings with the clouds of star dust; or with the first geological period; and then say whether as a shining wonder the power surpasses the purpose of the universe.

Does not a movement so forward looking, so irresistible, so wise, and so beneficent denote the forthgoing of a Will?

It is an exact duplicate of what we know as will among men.

When men accomplish things that bear but the most distant resemblance to the great achievements of the universe, we give them praise for having a will great enough to translate such beneficent thoughts into actual results.

Any one of us could write a most fascinating volume on the purposeful achievements of the universe; thousands of such volumes have been written.

It is about details concerning the wisdom and energy involved in stupendous accomplishments that scientific books principally inform us.

Since no one can count the number of atoms in a grain of sand, we are appalled at the thought of how many atoms it takes to make the earth; and we are stupefied at the mere suggestion of the number of atoms in the composition of the universe.

Yet all these atoms play a part in the one great movement going forward toward something better, fuller, and yet more satisfying.

¶ "Where is this wonderful God?" *As energy,* He is present wherever there is an object of sense; wherever there is any kind of discernible phenomena.

He is *expressing Himself* wherever there is anything bearing the marks of wisdom, love and purpose.

Of course, Wisdom, Love, and Will can not be picked up in hands and examined with eyes; but expressions of them, something that bears their imprint, may actually lie in our hands and be enjoyed by us through our senses.

In the same way, a painted canvas, a piece of chiseled marble, a human body in action, or a breath of air modulated into a word is precious to us; these things express thought and manifest love and purpose.

How all this comes to be true of us, or of God, the wisest person in the world does not know, but it will continue to seem perfectly natural and wholly to be expected as long as we take life in a practical, common sense way.

No one ever saw an object that was not marvelous in its composition, nor did he ever experience a thought that was dissevered from all objects.

Nothing ever floats off and lives by itself in complete isolation; for, however individual it may otherwise become, it still remains rooted and grounded in the Great Original.

Unity in diversity is a fact that everywhere confronts us.

No matter how extremely much developed an individual becomes, he still draws his nourishment for body and mind from that in which he is planted; the very continuance of his existence depends upon his remaining a part of the whole.

However striking the contrast and wide the gulf between individual things, they somehow hang together.

¶ The God who shaped some of His energy into the form that goes by the name of nerves among men, must be able to think without them Himself or else He never could have made them; but His offspring naturally depend upon some combination of His energies for their conscious awakening and support.

Once we believed that God made a great hulk of stuff, endowed it with self-shaping and self-propelling power, and set it adrift from Himself where it could exist in complete independence.

Unless God saw fit to intrude by some miraculous form of interference, we thought that the world managed to manage its own movements.

With our ampler knowledge of things, we now believe the visible, the organized world to be composed of the present and ever active energy of God; and that the forces about us which move so skillfully, so beautifully, and so benevolently do so because they are God expressing Himself by means of His own energy.

God shapes and crystallizes the ceaseless flow of His energy into a beautiful sense world, and then awakens minor intelligences to conscious life to inhabit such portions as are amply and suitably organized to be the seat of intelligence.

And when these minor intelligences think His thoughts over and will His will over, then God gets expressed, not only through blooming flowers and rolling spheres as in the past, but in human language; and when He can be expressed in human speech, He can also be expressed in human deeds.

¶ When this comes to pass as it did in Jesus, and as it does feebly in our less obedient lives, then the climax and most precious manifestation of God's personal life is realized: and He, the Adorable Father, who remains "Center and Soul of every sphere," at the same time, walks the shores of Galilee and sits in every friendly circle, the loving Heart of loving hearts.

When the invisible mind of man comes to know and lock thought with the invisible Mind of the universe then, together, they commence shaping the universe into a kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy.

¶ While the God thus pictured is none too great for a

God, yet He is too great to be completely fathomed by us who are not God.

That does not mean, however, that we can not know and love Him; for many people do know and love God; to no small degree they love Him because He does exceed their comprehension.

Especially can they know and love the God-filled and the God-revealing Jesus.

In his best moments, John Burroughs was a really sweet and enchanting singer of the praises of God; but failed to know that he was because he was a victim of the crude and false conceptions of God that too generally prevail.

Often a little readjustment of thought will set everything right. Paul knew a time when he knew much truth that seemed antagonistic to Jesus and His teachings; but one day, old truths slipped into new relations and, behold, his good old world became a better new world.

Paul came to see that Jesus was not, as he had hastily assumed, destroying his thought world, but simply fulfilling it; making it full-orbed.

¶ Because the avenues of expression of God are necessarily so varied and vast, both in human life and in nature, I call upon all scientists who are studying His activities in the laboratories, and all poets who see His beauty and love in the great open; I call upon all who have knowledge and gifts, of any kind, to use them to proclaim in mighty chorus the Wisdom, Goodness, and

Glory of the Almighty Father in whom all people and all things dwell.

The heavens are God's energy going forth to find expression in rolling spheres; beautiful as diamonds, terrible as infinite explosives and, from our safe distance, gentle as a mother's love, useful as a quiet home, cheerful as a glowing hearth.

Day unto day, God utters His speech; and night unto night, He reveals His knowledge.

Flowers swaying in the breezes are as truly God waving to us, as the fluttering handkerchiefs of friends bidding us welcome or adieu.

Everything, from the fiery gases of the heavens to fragile flowers and quivering nerves, is a form of His energy bearing the imprint of God's wisdom and love.

¶ As I see it, escape from God is no more possible to us than escape from the tangible universe; but those who confine themselves almost exclusively to one aspect of God's life incapacitate themselves for seeing Him really and truly. He must be seen in His manifoldness.

Those who devote themselves to the mere mechanics of God's cosmic energy, and those who simply use the energy of God at their disposal as a means of satisfying animal needs, become materialists.

Those who exclusively occupy themselves with God as Absolute Mind, become rationalists.

And those who think of God as nothing but Love, divide into fanatics of many varieties.

Jesus, the ideal man, kept the Wisdom, Love, and

Energy of God in true balance; and thereby knew the true God.

And Paul, His greatest Apostle, without being or becoming a pantheist, could say that God was over all, in all, and through all.

¶ With Paul and Jesus I believe in the validity of my own self-communing soul; and the souls of my neighbors; but this belief does not compel me to sever them from the enfolding energy of God.

I do not feel forced to strip God of His cosmic energy as so many do in order to believe that when His energy is amply and suitably organized for their advent, real spiritual children of His wake to consciousness within God's rich enfolding life; children who are capable of coöperating with their Father and with one another in building up an everlasting kingdom.

¶ God must bear some likeness both to men and to atoms because men and atoms both bear a likeness to Him.

In one sense God is as near and knowable as ourselves; but in another the greatness of God, as I conceive of Him, is staggering to contemplate.

Such Wisdom, such Love, such Energy, who can contemplate unprostrate?

Before the God of the stars; the God of stellar ether; the God of electrons; the God of all hearts; before such a God, I bow my knees, humble my soul, and reverently call him Father.

CHAPTER II

HOW DID GOD MAKE THE HUMAN BODY?

Is the evolutionary origin of man compatible with the noblest Christian sentiment?

Which view of man's origin is the better supported by facts?

May one still be a useful Christian if he does not believe in evolution?

¶ Once we believed that God created matter out of nothing; that He then took this formless matter and in six days moulded it into the universe.

The first day, He made light; the second day, He made a canopy for the earth; the third day, He made grass, herbs, and trees; the fourth day, He made the sun, moon and stars; the fifth day, He made all kinds of water animals and birds; the sixth day, He made all land animals and man.

The first full-grown males and females of all vegetable and animal life were instantaneously made from the dust of the ground.

The first hen was made before there was ever an egg. Horses were made before there ever were any living cells out of which to make them.

¶ We no longer believe that God made matter out of nothing; nor do we believe that He shaped the universe without regard to His present laws of physics and chemistry.

¶ Manifestly, God's method of creation from the beginning was to combine electrons into atoms, atoms into molecules, and molecules into masses.

¶ It was a long journey from electrons to suns; and another vast span of time from suns to planets that were fit to support organic life; and still ages upon ages from single cell to the higher animals; and still other long ages before man appeared.

Regardless of how species originated, the veritableness of the gradual advance from lower to higher forms, involving many millions of years, admits of no doubt; the record of this fact is written in stone.

¶ It is certain that God never made a canopy for the earth; and equally certain that vegetation was not produced before the sun and stars.

Trees were not made at the beginning of vegetable life; and whales, cattle, horses, and men were not formed at the very beginning of animal life.

All this has been clearly written for us in God's great nature volume—the seals of which have now been broken.

The Scriptures tell us *Who* made things, and with what loving and moral intent He made them.

How He made them, is being read from nature's great book. The suns, or stars, got their initial start in electrons, and living organisms theirs in living cells.

After the earth was brought to its present size, it then became coated over with drift and sediment during a long geological period known as the Azoic age; and still there was no life.

Then followed the Proterozoic age with its millions of years during which further layers of rock were laid upon the face of the globe by deformation, erosion, and sedimentation.

During this second unimaginably long age, the only remaining evidences of life are the deposits of carbonates, and the trails made by some crawling creatures.

In the Cambrian age which followed, fossils of various species appear in great numbers.

Not, however, until the next geological period, the Ordovician, did the lower vertebrates appear.

During this period great portions of the earth's surface were submerged, and these shallow waters afforded a great opportunity for the rapid development of life.

And yet, a dozen geological periods, wonderful in their diversity, intervene between then and the present time; a dozen volumes in rock, piled one upon the other, that preserve the record of a progressive creation.

¶ These stone books, every one of which was ages in the making, clearly show that "fishes preceded amphibians; amphibians preceded reptiles, and reptiles preceded birds."

The further one goes in all lines of knowledge the more strikingly it appears that the end was latent in the beginning, and that the present is always "the child of the past and the parent of the future."

Nothing is known anywhere, in any field, that contradicts evolution; and everything loudly suggests it and in many ways beautifully illustrates it.

So soundly is this true that the overwhelming majority of scholars find their minds are incapable of believing anything else. As far as I know, no scholar doubts the general facts of evolution.

1. Is the Evolutionary Origin of Man Compatible with the Noblest Christian Sentiment?

¶ We shall consider the sentimental aspects of the subject first because sentiment is of first importance.

Require us to live in a world that does not arouse noble sentiment, and religion vanishes.

If God cannot win our hearts while He enlightens our minds, then He can not hold our allegiance.

A Christian evolutionist not only believes that God made man of the dust of the ground, but he believes that He so made every living creature; he does not think of God as apart from nature, but thinks of Him as at work in every atom.

As to God's having made man of dust, that admits of no doubt; because all vegetable and animal life *comes* from dust, *eats* dust, and *returns* to dust.

The Christian evolutionist also believes that God made the human spirit in His own image; in the image of Himself who is a spirit.

The Christian evolutionist is very insistent on Fatherhood and Sonship.

And as regards the human body, he not only thinks of it as a marvelous revelation of God's wisdom and love, but believes that every atom in the universe, whether it be in the sun, in the body of a serpent, or in the body of a man, is a revelation of God.

In comparison with a human body, which is a little universe in itself, and especially in comparison with a body endowed with an intelligent and loving soul, the atom is a very poor picture of God.

Nevertheless, the atom as an expression of God's creative wisdom and power is no mean representation in itself of Him.

And in speaking thus of the atom, I do not mean the atoms in the body of some saint, but every atom in this universe, regardless of what it is in.

¶ Since all nature from top to bottom is God's own energy moving at the behest of His gracious wisdom, therefore all nature is God-revealing.

In spite of the fact that some things in nature are offensive to the five senses, as they should be, yet viewed from a chemical and biological point of view everything is beautiful, clean, and divine.

In wrong relations everything is harmful; but that only means that we must learn to coöperate with our Father in the great work of living and in the beautiful task of keeping the house, His and ours, in order.

The evolutionist does not believe in a vile world, save as it is made vile by the wickedness of man; he believes that God either created everything or He created nothing.

Since everything lives and moves and has its being in God, it is all very intimately related to Him, and therefore very closely related to us.

If God is not ashamed of His relation to nature, which includes all animals, neither should we be ashamed of our relation.

If a human body is kept clean, well dressed, and dedicated to noble works, it offers a striking contrast to the condition into which a filthy, wicked man gets his body, or even with the body of the noblest of animals; that is, the contrast is striking from the social point of view; but in the laboratory and on the dissecting table, they are all wonderfully alike.

A single-cell animal is much the same as any one of the trillion cells that goes into the makeup of a human body.

All animal life feeds and breeds and strives and dies in much the same way; even microscopic life acts like man in some ways; animals of a higher order show a stronger likeness in form and conduct; but only God is like man at his moral and personal pinnacle.

¶ In some quarters more or less sentimental aversion to the idea of evolution lingers on.

There are still a good many people who feel that such a belief dishonors man, and possibly that it eliminates God as Creator.

If such were the truth, the situation would be very serious indeed.

An ever increasing number of other people, however, feel exactly the opposite.

Neither of these parties can be changed by persecution and besides, persecution is not Christian.

What the world needs is light and not fight.

¶ I first came to believe in evolution for sentimental reasons. Any other method of producing the human body, of which I could conceive, appeared distasteful to me.

This change came to me forty years ago during a session of the Geology class.

I forgot the class around me and tried to conceive of God making a full-sized man directly from the dust without following His common biological method.

How did He assemble the dust?

I decided that He did not gather the dust with hands and mould it into a human form.

Did He catapult the dust together as by magic? That too seemed utterly improbable.

Did He animate the requisite amount of earth and cause it to rise up and walk off as a living man?

Did He turn clay in the lump directly into bone, tissue, vital organs, and brain?

I did not limit His power, but putting no limits on His power, something within me said that He never did it that way.

Did God either literally or figuratively blow into the mouth of a clay man in order to enable him to become a living soul?

The more I meditated upon the idea, the less real and the more distasteful it all appeared.

That was not the way the Almighty worked. At any rate, that thought lost all grip on my mind.

Then I asked myself the question, Why do we object to evolution?

Is it because animal flesh is unclean? But animal flesh is clean enough to eat; and to whatever extent we use animal food, to that degree our own bodies are made up of elements transmuted from animal flesh.

Do we object to evolution because man would on this theory begin too low down mentally and morally?

But I could see that no physical organism would be entitled to be called man before it became a fit instrument for a soul; and the moment it became possessed of a soul, it would cease to be an animal.

An animal with a soul is man.

¶ Would it not be better then, to think that we began with bodies that were developed from clean, alert, and well-disciplined animals; from ancestors with senses that had all been trained by long use under severe discipline, than to begin so innocently and then before we got fairly started fall into savagery?

If our ancestors without a self-conscious soul knew all the ways of the jungle, and managed to survive in the midst of cunning and fierce enemies, does not that situation throw all the advantage on the side of evolution?

All this chatter raised about the monkeys that we know and so dislike, is wide of the mark.

They have never come within a million leagues of being fit instruments for a soul.

A soul could not be awakened in anything so crude and so lacking in the needed qualifications.

They should not disgust us with our noble physical ancestors, but sharply warn and deter us from sinking down and degenerating into monkeys like themselves.

If the noble animals that later became endowed with souls could degenerate as rapidly as some human beings do, then those that did not push on to better things might easily have become jabbering monkeys condemned to an ever narrowing sphere; especially since those that became men pushed forward to subdue and possess the earth.

Our highly bred dog is not in the least disagreeable; he is adorable.

And if he could enter into all our experiences, we should know that he was a brother in spite of the fact that he is a quadruped.

Yet with all his adorableness, the possibility of his ever becoming an equal of man is negligible.

¶ Let us dismiss our monkeys, then, as we do some of our second and third cousins whom we dislike.

However much or little we may resemble apes, we are not their kinsmen.

To find an ancestor common to us both, the most aristocratic ape now living would need to trace his ancestors back a million years, and then we should need to trace ours back a million years.

And when we recall that there is only six per cent of blood relationship between us and our great-great-grandparents, we need not feel very near to the apes.

If I were a direct descendant of King Swain, in the tenth century, there would be but one five-millionths of one per cent of blood relationship between us.

There is no question but that we and the most degraded aborigines of Australia and Africa sprang from the same source; but we are blood relations no longer of those distant ancestors, nor of the present-day aborigines who are as far removed from the common original source as are we.

The degraded peoples of the earth at the present time are probably much inferior to their ancestors of twenty thousand years ago.

As the progressive ancestors of some peoples were more noble and attractive than their decadent posterity, so the progressive primates that became men were more noble and attractive than such of their posterity as have turned decadent.

¶ But I have wandered a bit from the Geology class. After dismissing the disagreeable thought of God's having animated earth *en masse,* I tried to visualize His usual method according to science of assembling the elements for every living thing; and for the first time, I saw into the beauty, the wonder, the cleanliness of all creation; I saw the miracle involved in the weaving of external elements into sensitive, living tissue by means of a little cell.

This was worthy of God; and this was the only way He had ever been known to work.

Immediately, the fitness, the divineness, the glory of it all dawned upon me, and I opened my eyes upon the beautiful tree of life; the genealogical tree, whose stalk and branches, and branches of branches, had all sprung out of the same root.

The top of that genealogical tree, the organism that was right in form, right in brain structure, right in the number and arrangement of the cells composing it; the front rank animal, the crown and glory of the entire organic kingdom—that, and that alone, was fitted to be endowed with a soul and made a son of God.

Here at last was an inner temple, in which the Father Himself would delight to dwell in a new intimacy, a worthy instrument through which Father and son could carry on together the great work of transforming the world into a heavenly home.

¶ That beautiful vision has never left me; in comparison with it, everything else seems hateful; sentimentally, I am a confirmed evolutionist, and have been for forty years.

Before I could believe in lump creation, I should have to see some of it; a thing which I never expect to do.

If I should see some earth turn into a horse or a man, the wonder of it would prostrate me.

I really enjoy believing that in assembling the materials for the first men and women, God used the beautiful method which He still employs in assembling our dust; the method of conception and birth.

Aversion to this method, as it seems to me, grows out of false views of God and low conceptions of the sacredness of all His works.

To the physicist, chemist, and biologist, nature is something very different from what it appears to be to the unenlightened mind.

¶ When we know nature only with our senses, senses benighted rather than enlightened, we must often be distressed, even nauseated, where we might be delighted if only we had a little better understanding.

To many educated minds chemical forces, organized and unorganized, have become almost as beautiful themselves as the Creative Mind that wills them.

A beautiful God could not perform vulgar deeds as He must have done if any part of nature is in itself vile.

Such a thought plunges us into religious confusion at the very start.

If God is beautiful and good, so are all His works if each thing is kept in its proper place and viewed from the standpoint of the divine intent.

It should never be forgotten that those things which we call the lowest and meanest still have their being in God.

While all nature is beautiful in itself, that does not alter but emphasizes the fact that our safety and sanity require that we learn to know the meaning and proper use of things and how to keep each thing in its right place.

In some circumstances, vile men should be regarded

with loathing and fear; in others, quite otherwise. Poison when so administered as to save the life of your child is a beautiful thing; and a horrible thing when your child mistakes it for food.

My instinctive aversion to snakes makes it difficult for me to run across the most beautiful and harmless serpent without killing it; for though I am ready to admit the litheness of its wonderful mechanism, yet my heel wants to bruise its head.

I know, too, that reptiles have served a large purpose in the economy of nature; but I cannot rid myself of the remembrance that they still serve among other uses as our best symbol of subtle temptation and cunning evil.

The cooked flesh of a snake—and I have seen it—would be most appetizing to look at if I did not know what it was.

When an organism has become sufficiently refined and complex to serve as the instrument of a spirit, it is further beautified and ennobled in a thousand ways in the course of that service under the control of the spirit.

This is abundantly illustrated by the race of men.

What is more beautiful than a human body that is dominated by a Christian spirit?

Or what is more repulsive than a vile, filthy, and degraded human body?

Clean, or unclean, is a relative term.

A large portion of the human family today make very repulsive associates in comparison with the company of a Christian gentleman.

If one doubts this, let him work in our slums, or in mission fields among the lowest aborigines.

2. Which View of Man's Origin Is the Better Supported by Facts?

¶ That there are no facts which suggest a miraculous origin for man, I will not affirm; but I can fearlessly say that I know of none.

Doubtless the majority of people are ready to admit that they have never investigated the subject.

Those who believe in the miraculous origin of man usually do so for two reasons: First, they are sentimentally inclined to that view. Second, they think that the Bible teaches it.

As to the sentimental reason, I have said enough.

Regarding the Bible, all that can be said is that the Scriptures merely relate that God made man of the dust of the ground without giving any information as to how He did it.

Beyond doubt, the Biblical writers thought that God made man and everything else, to begin with, in a miraculous manner; but they did not say so.

They were neither for evolution nor against it, because they had never heard or thought of such a thing.

Many who now believe in evolution were once sentimentally averse to it; but their sentiments have undergone a radical change because of their better inside knowledge of nature.

The greatest difficulty in dealing with this subject lies

in the fact that the majority of people look upon nature almost exclusively from the outside.

This is a great pity; for when nature is seen from both the outside and the inside, heaven itself can not be more wonderful.

¶ If, however, the origin of man is not absolutely known, then why take sides? Why not drop the subject entirely?

That sounds much easier to do than it really is.

To live worthily—one might add to live at all—we are compelled to study the world in which we live and of which we are a part.

And when we do this, we learn millions of new and startling facts about the world that no one can deny or doubt.

Now it so happens that when these very numerous new facts touch the universe at a sufficient number of points, and all head in the same direction, they become so heavily charged with meaning that faith, like the electric spark, can no longer be held back.

That is just what has happened in connection with this subject of man's origin.

Thousands of devoted Christian men and women have come into possession of such an array of facts upon it, pointing the same way, that they are helpless against the swift-flowing currents of so much *positive knowledge.*

¶ All streams of knowledge now flow in the direction of evolution.

Men have safely sailed all around the subject of man's origin; they have climbed above it; they have digged be-

neath it; they have done everything but pick up the fossil that puts the last plank in the bridge between the highest extinct animals and man; they may even have done that; some think they have.

But the testimony of every science so dovetails into that of every other science on the subject of man's origin, all the sciences so coalesce with history, and science and history make so complete a story that its status today is similar to that of a narrative with but one word missing.

Sometimes I get letters from friends that contain one or two words that I never positively make out, yet I am positively sure that I get all that is essential in their message.

Plenty of men are living today in the light cast by all this knowledge of an evolutionary world; they are feeling its grip; they are entering its open doors; they are actually helping to coördinate the evolutionary forces; and they are reaping fruits worthy of their toil.

¶ That, putting it to the test of practice, in short, is the reason why they believe in evolution.

By the prevalence and universality of the evidence for the evolutionary method, they are convinced that it is divine, that it is a great revelation from God.

Now that it has become their deepest faith, like true Christians, they can but proclaim it.

Evolutionists seldom refer to the origin of man because that is but *one incident* in the great evolutionary drama of the universe.

The subject might well be dropped as one of no great consequence, if the origin of man were the whole of evolution.

However, the facts all support a very different conclusion; even if it could be positively known that God created one man and one woman in a miraculous way, that act would only mean that He deviated from His evolutionary method but for a moment.

If that were true, we should still have to recognize evolution as God's common method of action and regard the origin of the human species as a single exception to the rule.

It is worthy of mention that no one has ever seen anything but evolution.

God has never been caught in a single act of creation by any other method.

Besides, all creation is by the fiat of God; whether it springs suddenly from a clod or slowly from the building up of cells, it comes to pass only because God says "let it be" and it is so.

Even revolution, of the most destructive kind, is only rapid evolution.

The human fetus is an example of both types. It evolves very slowly for the first month or two and then advances by leaps and bounds.

Nothing, indeed, evolves with absolute, even regularity; neither a stalk of corn nor a boy.

Entirely aside from the subject of human origin, the evolutionist is a new type of man. He lives in a new

world, he speaks with a new accent, what he says is different; regardless of what his subject of discourse may be.

He is listened to as one who makes old subjects new. He is not trying to be different, he *is* different; he is a new man in a new world.

¶ As already stated, I first believed in evolution for sentimental reasons; because, as the method of creation, it was more pleasing to me and, as I thought, more worthy of God.

But when I looked for the rational evidences in support of my sentimental preference, my surprise was even greater than my satisfaction.

I never expected to find the one-hundredth part of that which I did find in confirmation of the evolutionary hypothesis.

Of course, I knew that human beings were propagated after the manner of animals, but not having studied embryology, it was a startling surprise for me to find that man, chicken, fish, or whatever else, has its life begin in the same way, as a single fertilized cell.

And it was even a greater surprise to learn that no one can tell the difference between a human embryo and that of any other mammal until it has run one ninth or more of its course.

At first the human embryo is indistinguishable; for its shape or form at the start is not that of a miniature human being.

It presents the appearance successively of a worm, a

fish, a reptile; even when the hands begin to appear as little buds it shows no signs of legs.

At the third week, its bronchial clefts resemble the gill slits of a fish.

The different stages through which the head evolves, the first appearance of the optic vesicle, the beginning of lungs, and all the rest of the birth story constitute a most astounding exhibit of evolution.

If human life began, as I used to suppose it did, as a very tiny human form, my reactions would have been different; but it bears no resemblance to a human being.

The long-drawn-out story of organic evolution which took the lengthy geological periods to write originally, here gets rewritten on one small page.

However the *first* human beings were formed, all others have been evolved; they have not simply grown, they have truly evolved, beginning at the lowest form and leaving them all behind one by one.

¶ Notwithstanding the great differences in appearance between men and the higher animals, they have all come up over the same evolution life route, the greater part of the distance together.

All front legs of animals are really arms, and the hind legs, when the flesh is exposed, are seen to be like the legs of a man.

When I was a boy, I often wondered why the knees on the hind legs of animals pointed backward while man's knees point forward.

I did not realize that an animal's thigh bones were im-

bedded in flesh which is called the ham; that their knees were at their flanks and that what I thought was the knee was originally the heel.

While currying horses, as a boy, I never got over wondering why they had those ugly and inconvenient scabs on their legs.

When I learned the evolution life story of a horse, the mystery was gone; they were rudiments of toes possessed by the horse when he walked on his heels as well as his toes.

When I learned that the hock was the original heel I no longer asked why the horse's knees turned backward; my own heels stuck out behind when I stood on my toes.

Then I used to wonder what was happening to the horse's eye when he shot a curtain across the eyeball two or three times in rapid succession; but my mind was relieved when I learned that it was a third eyelid, and that our human ancestors of long ago had the same.

Today, we have but the rudiment of a third eyelid, which accounts for the lump in the corner of the eye that once puzzled me.

Since we have had hands with which to remove dust from our eyes, we have allowed our third eyelid to degenerate through disuse into a mere vestige of its former self.

It was a great surprise to me, that further confirmed the theory of evolution, when I learned that the higher animals as well as ourselves, have several hundreds of

these worthless remnants in our bodies; vestiges of organs that were fully developed and useful to our animal ancestors.

The vermiform appendix is one of the most troublesome and, therefore, best known of the useless left-overs in our bodies to remind us whence our bodies came. What you find is all just like this, whichever way you turn.

¶ If you study geology, there evolution confronts you; you can not go into the field of physiology, with all its branches, without evolution forcing itself upon your attention.

Whether you study fossils, or antiquities, or the ancient history of man, everything points in this one direction.

And when one has looked into twenty or thirty sciences that dovetail and overlap, if he is at all like the average person, he is helpless to comply when asked to believe in anything but evolution.

Neither is evolution as the law of growth confined to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms; it is the law of language growth, the law of art growth, the law of music growth, the law of love growth, the law of growth everywhere.

As far as knowledge and observation go, the present is always "the child of the past and the parent of the future."

If there is any doubt about it, the burden of proof rests with those who deny evolution; for no evidence of anything else has ever been seen by anyone.

"Why are not apes still becoming men?" It might better be asked, why are not Hottentots, who are men, becoming like truly civilized Americans.

In either case, the intervening laps of growth are absolutely impossible of negotiation without a radical change of present environment.

The Hottentots are like blind fishes that live in dark caves.

There is nothing in the Hottentot's present environment that will ever lead him to advance without help from the civilized world.

¶ Today the earth is so thoroughly preëmpted by the highly developed nations that even the inferior races of men stand a poor show of obtaining the eons of time required for advanced growth.

Man is making it increasingly difficult for animals of all kinds to survive in the natural state.

No such biological changes are likely to take place as occurred during those long geological periods of the past because the very conditions that made the changes possible are gone.

In the geological period in which we are living, the earth's changes are insignificant in comparison with those of the past.

Every form of life has been driven to dwell in a relatively fixed environment to which it has become adjusted and where for the most part it must remain.

Many species have become extinct because their one-time favorable environment is gone; and many primitive

forms which persist seem condemned to live forever unchanged in their original environment.

¶ If we are not to have great fresh geological upheavals, such as occurred millions of years ago, the lower forms of life are never likely to escape from their present environment.

For example, unless the seas are shunted into new basins and their temperature changes, what chance is there longer for the descendants of fishes to become land animals?

Or while man holds sway, what chance is there for great beasts to take possession again of the earth?

In the days that great bulky creatures ruled the earth, they drove the lesser animals to new modes of life and to new lines of development.

But man now drives everything hither and yon. Nothing can survive long that man dooms to destruction.

The face of the American prairie has been swept desert clear of animals in my lifetime and it will be the turn of the African jungle next. Man is lord of the earth.

In the long ages of the past, amid catastrophic changes, many types of animals worked to prepare the way and make the earth fit for man.

And man still needs the service of a variety of animals ranging from microscopic to the noblest of creatures.

Many of these he must cultivate with the greatest care for his own preservation.

Other still existing animals have done their work, and may be left to perish, or even made to perish.

It took limitless ages for the elements and the animals which worked together to bring about the present conditions.

And when God had thus prepared the earth, and living organisms had climbed from single-cell creatures to the highest animals known, it was only necessary for nature to evolve one step further to produce a fit temple for a soul.

Having reached in man the high step on the physical stair required for the advent of soul, why should God be interested to do the same thing over again?

Since the arrival of Man, evolution has transferred its principal attention to the human mind, where it continues on a higher plane.

True, changes are still occurring all along the physical line as far as the more circumscribed modern environments will permit; but the scene of the greatest evolutionary changes that can now take place is the realm of mind and morals, and in the regions of the manipulation of the forces of nature by man.

Man's is the guiding hand. He may control the elements, he may create artificial environments, he may greatly modify the vegetable and animal kingdoms; he may do all this in the interest of civilization; henceforth, back of all great developments are to be the mind and character of man.

If the future course of this spiritual kind of evolution be governed by keen intelligence and moral in-

sight, the heights to which man may attain are inconceivable.

But if he should prove unfit for this noble task; if he slips into the ways of ease and moral lassitude—should he lose his vision, forget his God and despise his brother, then the very forces of evolution will turn hostile and dash him on the rocks as a thing unfit.

By the laws of evolution God has produced a livable world for men, and if His children will work with Him, by the same laws they may shape the universe into an abode of infinite beauty and utility.

3. May One Still Be a Useful Christian if He Does Not Believe in Evolution?

¶ Yes, he may be a very useful Christian; but not as useful, in my opinion, as if he were both a consecrated man and an intelligent evolutionist.

One who does not believe in evolution may be more useful temporarily among those who are not ready for it; but much less useful among those who are ready.

The most conspicuously useful men and women whom I know, have been evolutionists all their lives.

¶ The evolutionist is equipped to present the gospel in a larger way and with a greater compelling force; that is, if he be really minded to preach the gospel.

Under the light of new knowledge he has a much more impressive version of the gospel to preach.

Things have gone so far, and so many of the people

of this generation have come to the parting of the ways, that no minister with a college education can morally justify his attitude if he fails to read all the best literature on the modern outlook.

Yet many ministers have scarcely a book that gives them the larger view of life and duty in their libraries.

This is morally wrong for teachers and leaders of the people.

Most of those who attack the views of modern Christian men misrepresent them at every point.

For one, I would willingly surrender life sooner than believe that which a few critics accuse me of believing.

No man has a right to attack anything until he knows exactly what it is that he attacks. I have heard the most violent denunciations of Darwin by men who admit that they never read his "Origin of Species."

If a fully enlightened man honestly disbelieves in the modern presentation of the gospel, I wish him to say so; but if his utterances reveal the fact that he is missing the point, his attitude becomes immoral.

¶ Like many ministers whom I know, I gladly exercise all the love and good will toward the conservative man that I wish him to accord me.

I know some conservative men whose religious character is infinitely superior to that of some progressive thinkers.

No views for or against can safely be substituted for a deeply religious life.

Regardless of how we classify ourselves, it is a dis-

qualification for much service, in this scientific age, to forget that all nature is of God; and it is a disastrous course for any minister to remain ignorant of those truths which are the common possession of millions of intelligent laymen.

The leaven of the gospel must be kneaded into the whole lump; and the lump is a thousand times bigger than we thought when I was a boy.

Many an intelligent layman goes to church and comes away saying, "The minister did not leaven my bread with the gospel; I guess the gospel does not blend with the facts of life as I know them."

Many of us when we attend a conservative, even a reactionary, church, can appreciate the gospel which is there mixed up with fifty things that we know are not true; but many more can not.

Yet there is little good in anyone's going to church unless the witness of the inner light assures him of God's presence in the service.

CHAPTER III

IS THE METHOD OF HUMAN PROPAGATION IDEAL?

Is the method of human reproduction a method becoming to the divine wisdom?

Would it not be better if the sex impulse did not appear before the age of fitness for marriage?

Are sex conditions at the present time a ground for optimism, or pessimism?

¶ Can such a prolific cause of sin and sorrow as human propagation through sex be ascribed to God?

Would not an all-wise God have thought of a better way?

Disagreeable as it was, at first, to hear that man probably stands at the top of an ascending line of animal ancestors, how much more shocking it was to learn that human beings were propagated after the manner of animals.

As a small lad, my father was away much of the time, and I had everything to do with animals on the farm. I looked after the breeding of them and, as sometimes

became necessary, assisted them in giving birth to their young.

So when I learned that everything pertaining to the propagation of animals was equally true of human beings, it was almost more at first than I could bear.

It sounded like a slanderous lie against God and my parents. I refused to believe the damnable heresy.

Finally, however, I was convinced of its truth by a boy who had much more evidence than reverence. Probably few children ever had this information conveyed to them under such appalling circumstances or in such a brutal manner.

If my parents could have suspected what a shocking experience I was to encounter, they never could have kept me in ignorance.

Yet, whatever be the way that the information comes to us, we all have to surrender our first belief that God miraculously creates babies; how it may affect us can in nowise alter the facts.

¶ Right education wisely undertakes to improve human sentiment by giving more facts, or by changing the point of view.

That change has taken place in me on this subject. My mother now seems inexpressibly dear to me for giving me birth in the manner she did, in view of all her beautiful thoughts that accompanied the beginning of my body.

A young wife wrote her parents from a distant land before her first baby came, that she used to pity women

in her condition; but that now, in her supreme happiness, she realized that to escape the beautiful prelude of nine months and still get her baby, "Would be like getting married before one had a lover." How justly proud her parents were of such a daughter.

¶ When they first learn the truth about human propagation, many children are greatly disturbed.

It seems so contrary to the modesty that has been carefully drilled into them; and in the second place, it appears dreadful because their ignorance is so complete in regard to the beautiful physical provisions that are made for the unborn child.

Though some wise parents have learned how to impart this information in a way that does not upset their children, yet I do not know that it can be done generally without some considerable disturbance to the mind of a child, because many new factors must enter the life of growing boys and girls before they can understand reasonably well the beauty and divine wisdom of creating children through the agency of parents.

The information that children are born, and not made in heaven, will give less shock if told to children when they are quite young rather than when they are just a bit older. And a wise and loving mother often does it in a way that makes her seem doubly dear to her child.

Moreover, that much information may be imparted long before it is safe for the child to know what part the father has in this creation. When it comes to that

information, the most difficult of all to reveal, Mary Wood-Allen has given some excellent suggestions in her little booklet, "Almost a Man."

1. Is the Method of Human Reproduction Becoming to the Divine Wisdom?

¶ Whether it is or not, we must admit that at the very threshold of human existence, it brings us face to face with some of the most stupendous facts of life. Here is something that affects society and religion for better or worse in a thousand ways.

Occasionally I meet some woman who is fierce in her opposition to the method of human propagation; as fierce as any of the opponents of evolution whom I have met in their opposition to the genealogy of mankind according to modern science.

The method has caused millions of others to wonder, who were not irreverent enough to condemn.

Often I have been asked, why did it have to be this way? or why did that feature have to be added? or why does it entail so much suffering on women?

If God created Adam and Eve without parents and did it so easily, why did He not keep on and create all human beings without parents?

If it be granted that we need babies for our discipline and for the awakening of parental love, all except the first human being could be created not grown up, but babes, and the whole sex problem, that so vexes society,

would be eliminated at a stroke. Then when a request was made for a baby, none need be given to those who are not fit to be entrusted with the care of a child.

The passing on of disease and physical imperfections would, also, be prevented. Besides, noble women who are deprived now as spinsters, could have perfect children direct from the hand of God to rear.

Some people are so opposed to the present method of human propagation that they make it their ground for not believing in God at all.

Our Christian Science friends are so displeased with what we call physical birth that they repudiate and will have nothing to do with the idea that anyone ever was physically born; to them physical birth and all pertaining to it is "a sensual belief"; a false and troublesome illusion that we must some day get rid of. They claim that God knows nothing of physical birth, for it has no existence beyond its existence as an "illusion of mortal mind."

So the repugnance and opposition to the present method of human propagation takes two forms, one class not believing in God because of its existence, and the other not believing in its existence, as a fact, because of their belief in God.

Of course, those of us who believe both in God and in physical birth, must try to justify the ways of God in this as in all other matters.

¶ First, as to the suffering that it entails upon women. To say that the pain experienced by them in childbirth, as well as other forms of suffering peculiar to women,

is greatly increased by the sins of modern civilization is a partial defense, for more primitive women do not suffer as much. The suffering that comes from broken hearts, diseased bodies, and wrecked homes, is largely due to the wanton sins of men.

While all this is very sad, and, as far as possible, should be remedied, it does not constitute a complete answer to the above objection.

¶ To my mind, if we are to live forever, as Christians believe, it requires no very deep philosophy to realize that it is best for us to begin at the very beginning of things and learn each lesson well.

At any rate, no doubt exists about where we begin; we begin as a tiny cell.

Even after birth, the potentially self-conscious soul advances very slowly; it takes weeks, months, and even years for us to become truly self-conscious.

Man, the son of the Infinite, goes to school with God, and nature is the schoolhouse.

At the start, therefore, God initiates His child into all the mysteries of existence in the process of giving him life and receiving him into a most holy and responsible partnership.

¶ If there were no such thing as sex affinity, it would be an irreparable loss to society. When the sex impulse is normal, and kept normal by being held in true relation to all noble sentiments and high ideals, it is further ennobled because they impart their own sanctity to it.

Under these conditions, it helps to consummate the

most sacred and complete friendship possible, the friendship of a true husband and wife.

Such husband and wife tend to become dearer to each other, if that were possible, than parents and children.

A true husband and wife are like a pair of eyes, two in number but one in the focus to which their two lives have been brought by the pitch to which their interpenetration is carried.

Their physical attractiveness, their mental adaptability, their mutual ideals, their common ambitions, their love of beauty, and the beauty of their love blend to make up the completest life known to man.

God's presence and approval form the very soul of this complete masculine and feminine union.

No happy element seems to be omitted; music alone of aught else combines in the same degree of coalescence the noblest ideals and the divinest inspirations with the richest blending of material elements.

¶ The eternal masculine and feminine are the two halves of a perfect whole through which God finds His completest expression.

Around this gateway to life are necessarily found roads ascending to the loftiest summits and others descending to the deepest chasms.

The depth to which the chasms will sink is measured by the altitude to which the peaks are lifted.

A leap from the summit's height means a plunge to the bottom of the abyss. The heights cause some to grow dizzy and take the plunge.

Here at the beginning of life is room and to spare for tragedy; and it too often follows. No one can exaggerate the glory of the summit, neither should he minimize the gloom of the chasm.

¶ When tragedies occur, our chief problem is how to deal wisely with the victims.

Two classes of victims are portrayed in the Scriptures: The one, confirmed in wrong doing, after eating her dainty meal purchased at the price of virtue, "wipes her mouth and says, I have done no wrong."

The other is like the woman who fell trembling before Jesus and her wicked accusers like a poor dumb, frightened animal.

¶ Those among us who have eaten this kind of forbidden fruit, divide still into these two classes: The one, hard, proud, and even boastful; the other, like the publican who "did not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.' "

In such a complex and kaleidoscopic world, all kinds of cases occur; from those who, like innocent and unsuspecting birds, find themselves ensnared, they know not how, to those who compass the earth to win a victim.

Some have been among the purest of earth before their humiliation, and after their redemption they have become even more pure, because the fires through which they pass melt the dross away and leave their souls white again.

¶ None but God is wise enough to mix and proportion

mercy and justice to the need and desert of each victim or offender.

The erring daughter of a certain Scotch elder was infinitely more sinned against than sinning, for she was kept a prisoner in her home for ten years as a punishment by her pharisaical father.

Then, a new minister who had been nearly two years in the parish, was first informed of her existence; and only because she wanted to take communion.

Needless to say, the minister proceeded to break the proud father's heart and to secure the release and human treatment of a white soul that had been drained of its blood and hope.

How different from the conduct of this father was the behavior of Jesus who said to the poor woman, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

Only God knows how many alabaster boxes have been broken over the feet of the forgiving Jesus.

Yet no one ever spoke more sharply to the unchaste: "No adulterer hath eternal life." He even went further and penetrated to the source of the evil: "He that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery."

2. Would It Not Be Better if the Sex Impulse Did Not Appear Before the Age of Fitness for Marriage?

¶ Why should there be those years of strain and danger between adolescence and the time for marrying?

The answer is that they are years of preparation.

Adolescence is the period of rapid growth, of a new sense of social relations, of newly awakened desires, visions, hopes, and ambitions and it has neither the time nor the strength for anything else than the acquirement of these raw materials for the construction of the mature adult life.

Of necessity, this work of accumulation commences while the body is young and plastic. The ten years of adolescence that precede marriage, is a period none too long for the heavy task thus laid upon the shoulders of the youth.

He is not fit for married life and the exacting responsibilities of business while this work of expansion is going on within his own life.

He must make himself, before he makes a career; and to do that, he must acquire all the ingredients that enter into the composition of a full man.

He must not only secure all the parts of a complete man, but he must learn how to assemble those parts and put them under the control of his will before he claims the full privileges of a man.

To be sure, this involves risk and danger, but risk and danger are unavoidable in tasks of the first magnitude, where achievements of the highest glory are possible.

Just as he would have no time for the great work of adolescent expansion after he is married and in business, so he has no time for marriage and constructive business while he is engaged in the exacting tasks of adolescence.

Though what goes on in the period of adolescence should make but may break a life, yet it would not be so uncertain which if we properly looked after our boys and girls.

If they are neglected during this period, we may expect evil after-consequences.

As it is, we often fail to do our duty by them and then they blame God for the results.

How often we hear it said, "I am not to blame, God made me this way; how can I help being what I am?"

¶ Young people should be instructed and befriended as regards the sex impulse by those who know the meaning and sacredness of all phases of life.

In addition to this, they should be wholesomely employed as much of the time as possible and their leisure surrounded by the best of influences.

Unfortunately, however, many boys obtain a world of distorted information on this most delicate subject from the thoroughly unprincipled; many of them work beside men and other lads whose conversation is saturated with lust; and not infrequently they take in the fact that some professing Christians thoroughly enjoy hearing or telling obscene stories.

Not even a minister can be long in the company of certain groups of men before his pardon is asked while a story infected with deadly poison is distributed; and if the minister is weak enough to smile while the crowd roars, he is pronounced "a regular guy and a jolly good fellow."

Considering the industrious way many people court hell, it is a wonder that society fares no worse than it does.

¶ Many boys, otherwise clean, without realizing the sin and danger of what they are doing, dwell upon thoughts having to do with sex that will bind upon them shackles as strong as those forged by opium or strong drink.

The practice is all the more deceptive and dangerous because the boys need go nowhere, buy nothing, do nothing, see no one, nor be seen; all they have to do is just to harbor thoughts of a sensual nature long enough and the harm is done, they have completed the formation of the habit of lustful thoughts.

Thereafter if they go wrong, their responsibility is much the same as that of an otherwise respectable man who gets intoxicated occasionally; just as what he calls his uncontrollable appetite is for drink, theirs is for lust.

Measures beyond anything heretofore used must be devised to teach boys and girls how to avoid or, once in, how to get out of the toils of this most blending and accursed habit, one that afflicts and sticks like a leech to a very large portion of society.

Furthermore, every young man should have it thoroughly drilled into him (and usually it is not) that it is unmanly and contemptible of him to compel the one whom he hopes to make his wife, to bear all the burden of protecting their mutual virtue.

¶ The adolescence period in which young people are so apt to go wild, may be turned to the noblest account.

It may be more than of passing interest here for me to testify that during the latter half of my ministry, I have not found a boy fourteen years of age into whose inmost soul I have not been able to enter through the vestibule of the sex question.

By having his tempestuous inner life explained and adjusted and its harmony restored he has invariably committed himself to a life of Christian service.

However, this work, when performed as it should be done by the minister, is performed in a very different way from the ordinary instruction on sex physiology and hygiene—though such instruction is included.

It needs to be lifted onto the plane of a spiritual art.

There is great need that more should be written about this art in a concrete and illustrative manner.

Like and equivalent happy results have been achieved with classes of young men from eighteen to twenty-two years of age who were already members of the Church. At their age, they were ready for an advanced course.

The sex impulse is one of the greatest blessings, or one of the greatest curses, according as it subdues or is subdued.

3. Are Sex Conditions at the Present Time a Ground for Optimism or Pessimism?

¶ Why under trying circumstances, or in unguarded moments, some men and women yield to temptation, admits of some sort of explanation.

But faced as they know they are by the prevalence

of this sin and the sorrow caused by it, why so much in the way of lustful suggestion is done or complacently tolerated by many who claim respectability is far harder of explanation.

Since everyone knows that it amounts to feeding a flame that threatens to destroy our civilization as it has destroyed nations in the past, this is appalling.

¶ In my opinion, this easy-going attitude is one of the chief danger zones of the world.

Sex passion is more dangerous for many people than their greed for money and strong drink; and besides, as society weakens here, the vicious element needs money more than ever for its evil business and will do more dastardly things to get the wherewithal to pay for the pleasure of vice.

When a young man is known to be spending too much money, the first surmise and fear is that some companion may be helping him to spend it in vice.

Because of the great number to whom sexual suggestions make successful appeals to their indulgence, the exhibition of them has a commercial value that severely taxes the arm of the law to restrain it from the most degrading excess even in our best cities.

It requires eternal vigilance to keep places of amusement, summer resorts, habits of dress, and periodicals free from exercising a vicious influence on multitudes who would not wish to be classed among the lewd and unrespected.

¶ While people are not generally as hopelessly weak as

some evil-minded persons believe, yet I am afraid that the situation is worse than some good people realize. At least, there is enough secret and open weakness to make us serious minded.

Even so, what gain is there in blaming God for the way we treat a great trust? That will not make things a whit better.

¶ Without becoming either overdiscouraged, or foolishly optimistic, let us accept God's methods of preserving the species as we know them to be; recognizing that our part in this partnership with Him in the production of human life can be so administered as to be the best possible provision for our happiness and training.

God might have made woman a dual sex, but that would have been an irreparable loss.

It is far better to be given the chance to accept the good under conditions of avoidable danger, than to be freed from those dangers at the expense of losing the good altogether.

¶ Around this partnership of God and man, and of man and woman, in the production of human life, stand on watch as sentinels, the peaceful Mount of Olives, the jagged hills of Mount Sinai, and the delectable Mount of the Transfiguration.

Each of the factors represented by these mountains of blessing is too important to be omitted from human life.

Law, love, and glory belong together; even God has no power to separate them. I am convinced that the exist-

ing provisions for making man are both beautiful and wise.

Here is this august assemblage at the very source of human life: the appeal of nature in a most tangible and subtle moment of revelation, God in the midst of His greatest creative capacity, law in its most imperative demands for safety, and love in its sweetest compelling influence all present and completely bound together; keen physical pleasure, deathless love for wife and children, the strongest sense of dependence upon God and the highest obligation to do right for love's sake, all combine in the execution of God's method of making and preserving a helpless human life.

¶ In every experience known to man, as well as in music and in art, physical pleasure performs a true and necessary part.

But physical pleasure must not suffer abuse and corruption; if it does the whole life is degraded.

Since in nothing that we can do or that happens to us can we escape physical pleasure or pain, we must learn to be safe and happy companions with them, and partly because of them.

Pleasure is a strong element in the bonds of attraction between man and wife; but upon mere pleasure, true love puts safe limits.

The children that are born are a new source of love and obligation that further help to keep mere pleasure of every sort within proper bounds.

Here again law is present to point out the safe road

for love to travel; and if that way is followed, glory awaits us.

Around God's method of making a human body is organized the true school of life, the family.

In this vital social unit nothing seems to be omitted; in the Christian family the universal kingdom has its beginning; just as cells combine to make a body, and individuals to make a family, so families combine to make a kingdom.

From this socialized vital unit, the family, the whole civilized body of society is evolved.

And as a body is no healthier than the cells in its make-up, so society is no healthier than the families of which it is composed.

¶ Let us rejoice then, in that method of creation which draws a man and a woman into the most endearing comradeship and makes them the parents of a little child that bears the impress of their combined image; that opens their hearts to the deep wells of father-love and mother-love, that makes possible the sweet, playful fellowship of little brothers and sisters, and thus binds a true family into a social unit by cables as strong as the power which holds the heavenly constellations in their course.

How can a man forget the strange new love he felt for his wife when first he learned that she was expecting to be the mother of his child? Has he ever known a richer or happier moment than when he saw their baby laid in her fond arms? The holy look of motherhood

that came to her dear face, and the light of yearning that shone in her eyes, were they not blessings above price?

¶ How else could God have taught us the blessed meaning of His own fatherly love, as we should know it, if any detail had been different? Philosophy could not have made that lack up to us, poetry could not have been written, music would be without soul, art could be no more than painting and chiseling, and work would be robbed of its chief reward.

How otherwise, Love, thou guide and light of all who truly live, couldst thou have been born?

The baby's first smile, the first tooth, the first word, the first step, the first heroic deed, the first day in school; ah, but for the continued succession of all those firsts, until that momentous last day before he went out into the great world from the shelter of the family nest, how could God have made us fit for life; for His own life of work and love?

¶ Then, too, after they go from us, we live our lives over again in them, and in their children, and in their children's children, until we draw near our journey's end.

Even in death Jacob wanted Joseph to close his eyes.

I never understood his wish until I closed the eyes of my own father; those warm eyes that would see no more on earth. The surprising warmth and softness that remained for a few moments after death in those eyelids, afforded the last human touch of him whom I delighted to call father.

¶ Man may at times falter, he may stumble, he may eat wormwood and gall, but written deep in his being is the saving health of a memory, that a very little thing may revive, of himself and his childhood home brooded over by a fond mother and a kind father.

¶ Dear father and mother, God's holy gift to us, we send after you our love and our prayers: and dear Father God, for making us thus, we hallow Thy Name.

CHAPTER IV

HOW IS THE SOUL MADE?

Could God have awakened souls to consciousness before He shaped His energies into a highly organized sense world?

Are soul and body made at the same time?

Does man have a share in soul-making?

Should children ten or twelve years of age join the Church?

Is it wise, kind, or necessary for God to ordain that we must pass through a dangerous period of adolescence?

Are there temptations peculiar to mature life?

Is it a misfortune to grow old?

Is death a curse inflicted because of man's sin?

¶ The mystery of *being* lurks in the heart of everything. How God, a human soul, or a spear of grass can exist at all, is past our understanding.

How we are able to think or feel or act, we do not know; yet we are very comfortably acquainted with all these sweet mysteries.

We do not need to believe that man's soul was made from nothing; we have ground for thinking it was evolved from the fullness of God's life.

Without, therefore, even seeking to delve into the impenetrable *mystery of being,* we will simply undertake to examine the road over which the soul comes to self-realization, the circumstances that attend its coming, and the manner in which it must react upon its boundless environment if it is to achieve its fullest, richest life.

1. Could God Have Awakened Souls to Consciousness Before He Shaped His Energies Into a Highly Organized Sense World?

¶ Apparently He could not; at least, He did not.

When God began to shape His energies into a sense world, the preparatory work of making intelligent souls was begun.

A look backward from our vantage ground makes it manifestly plain that a family of souls was God's objective from the beginning.

Had we been onlookers in the beginning, however, we never should have dreamed that souls would finally emerge from such a confounding and terrifying display of forces as was then taking place.

Much less could we have realized that this frightful dynamic outburst of the Infinite would create a delicate living cell, something so delicate that any but the lightest touch would destroy it; nor that provision could be made by which this tender cell would lie safely cradled

and cushioned in the midst of this swirling, fiery energy of the universe.

We could not have foreseen the systems of checks and balances that would gradually lessen the awful strokes of cosmic energy until they would fall gentle as a breath upon the little cell; nor could we have conceived of how anything so delicate and subtle as a self-conscious soul could be awakened in the sensitive organism.

But looking backward, we can trace the sequence: soul to body, body to universe, universe to divine energy; and all of them definitely bound together and embosomed in God where they always potentially were.

¶ A child could not have visioned the coming of the first automobile until all its machinery was in place and the car began to move of its own power.

Similarly, before the ignition which set in motion the first self-conscious soul that began to rule over God's forces from which it sprang, and to praise its maker, no one like unto our present selves would have guessed what God was doing.

The order and manner of what God does often lie open before us after it is done; but how He is able to do it at all, we do not know.

We perceive enough to know, looking backward, that the preparatory work for the begetting of souls was a process indescribably long and overwhelmingly great.

This by itself predisposes us to concede a place of the highest importance to a soul.

2. Are Soul and Body Made at the Same Time?

¶ It is absolutely known that God does not call souls into conscious being here on earth by an act unrelated to the integration of His energies.

The crowning act of begetting a soul is not isolated from, but attached to, a universe, a fertilized cell, and a growing body.

A human body is God's universe blossoming; it is God's promise of a soul soon to appear.

As a fruit blossom is the cradle of the fruit, so the human body is the cradle of the soul.

Since the self-conscious soul awakes only after the body has been played upon by a myriad of influences, the soul may therefore, in a very rudimentary way, begin with the beginning of the body.

Though the body functions in a simple way before birth, and to a higher degree immediately after birth, yet there remains much to be done after birth to make it a fully obedient, workable instrument.

Soul and body unfold together. Very early in the child's life the conscious soul begins to appear, but the work of perfecting it is eternity long.

¶ As the soul can not grow in capacity unless the body grows in size, neither can the soul improve in quality unless the nerves and muscles are trained.

Since soul and body thus unfold and prosper or weaken together, they must be trained together.

Nothing can be done to the one without doing something corresponding to the other.

It may, therefore, truthfully be said that soul and body are made or marred in the same process, and that the making of a perfect instrument for the use of a perfect soul is our chief occupation.

¶ From almost the beginning of life, the soul outgrows its immediate body and must lay hold of other objects and make them likewise its instruments.

As the soul's power to invent grows, its ability to appropriate increases, and the universe progressively becomes its body, or instrument, which it uses in common with God and other souls.

Since both individual and social expansion are thus achieved, applied science, therefore, becomes a highly religious duty.

Scientific knowledge in the possession of the unprincipled is the most dangerous thing in the world.

But when applied science devotes itself to the execution of a Christianized program, it becomes both the soul's means of self-enlargement and the means by which it transforms the universe into a heavenly home full of divine tools at our service.

¶ The child-body must not only be exercised, but it must be skillfully acted upon by a myriad of enveloping forces, physical and spiritual, or the soul will cease to grow.

The beautiful task of enlarging and perfecting environment and soul together is our lifelong concern.

And when we learn how to grow soul and body together without war and without friction, then we shall find incredibly more real satisfaction in living.

Set up perfect harmony between body and soul, between man and man, and between God and man, and we will have a universe vibrant with the love of righteousness, and the joy of a divine family living peacefully together in Father's house.

¶ An occasional person may have a body that is defective in many respects and still achieve a wonderful development of soul.

For example, a man may be blind and still a great man, but he could not be great if all men were blind.

A man may have no hands and yet be large in intellectual and moral stature since he is served in a thousand ways by those who have hands.

Because we are members of a vast social body, a man may be maimed in many ways without soul injury, provided his brain is not injured.

A generally weak body must have some sound spot in it, however, to foster a great soul; and all souls residing in defective bodies must be surrounded and helped out by normal beings or come to grief.

Where there is no body there is no soul, and where there is but little body as to brains, there is but small development of soul.

Not infrequently, I know, the crippled child comes to have the trained brains of the family; he is the only

educated one and he was educated by the great sacrifices of the family simply because he was a cripple.

That we belong to groups and live in social relations, is inexpressibly fortunate for every one of us; for the most capable person by himself can supply but few of his imperative needs.

3. Does Man Have a Share in Soul-making?

¶ It has already been shown in the previous chapter, that from the fertilizing of the single, minute cell at the beginning to the birth of the fully formed body, man takes a part; and that the health and conduct of the parents have greatly affected the outcome of the constitution-making that goes on in the unborn babe.

¶ After the birth of the child, the delicate work of evoking his self-conscious soul immediately begins.

From this stage of soul-making on, man takes a larger share; the parents, the neighbors, and the child himself become important factors in this supreme task.

If the body is one of poor quality, their problem will be more difficult to solve and the results are likely to be proportionately less satisfactory.

If the child is born with a physical sensitiveness that is abnormal, an inner propulsion will combine with the outer stimulus to give the child a predisposition to wrong thoughts and actions.

To meet that situation will necessitate the stimulating

of dormant counter-balancing feelings that will ward off the kinds of stimulus to which he is supersensitive.

The divine-human task of making a soul after the birth of a child is the most delicate and serious work to which man is called; it is a work that never ends, because a soul is never finished.

¶ After birth, God does not leave off, but continues to carry on the chemistry of the body and to coöperate with the parents in all ways.

The chemistry of the body, as we have already said, is part and parcel of the integration of God's own energies in the universe; for nothing less than this whole integration of God's energies is the matrix of the soul.

God, however, is successful in His further work of building the body only as the parents accept the responsibility He lays upon them and intelligently coöperate.

They must find food suited to the particular child because the child not properly cared for, suffers and, being fretful, taxes itself in harmful ways.

The energy that it should be spending in learning to see and hear and play, is spent in crying and fretting.

Many children thus waste precious months during this important period of achieving a soul.

If the child for days and weeks is kept too warm or too cold, or in discomfort of any other kind, the ill effects are registered in the nervous system from which the self-conscious soul proceeds, and communicate themselves to it.

All the sights and sounds that play upon the sensi-

tive little body help to determine its future characteristics.

If the child gets too much or too little attention, the evil results are much the same. And if influences of the wrong sort are brought to bear upon it, the child's disposition receives a wrong bent.

¶ As the child reaches two or three years of age, the way that the spirit and temper of the parents begin to affect it becomes intensified.

If the father and mother are filled with love and strength, their treatment will both consciously and unconsciously, but much more unconsciously, affect the child in a thousand ways for good.

At five years of age, a child may receive the spiritual life of its parents as a rose drinks in the sunlight.

The religious conversations of my mother with me at this period, thrilled my whole being.

No mother should fail to spend quiet hours alone with each child of hers and reveal to them her divinest heart. Neither should any father do less.

Both child and parents need these times of intimacy for their fuller and richer growth. But alas! many parents have no such life to give, and consequently their children are robbed of some of the greatest formative influences in the achieving of a soul.

God Himself is deprived of access to the child because the parents, forgetting their responsibility, have unwittingly closed the door through which He might enter; the door of their own lives.

My own precious memories make the sight of little children of five, whose parents have not the supreme gift to give, a sorry one for me.

I love and pity such little children because they will never know the sweetest thing that ever came to me; the saving thing that has followed me through all my sinning, repenting, and striving.

However, simply because many have not this gift to bequeath their children, I will not permit myself to forget that many others have, and they are the greatest hope of the world.

Nevertheless, those who did not absorb the beautiful sense of God during the first critical period of soul-making, usually find the sense of God dim when they are grown up, and much more difficult to acquire.

It is not easy to salt bread after it is baked, nor to give God-consciousness to a soul after it has become too much engrossed with worldly interests.

¶ As I look back on my life, I am convinced that it would have been far better for me to have missed the Sunday school than to have been kept from church during the years between five and ten.

I never had any sense of God awakened in me in the kind of Sunday school that I attended.

I am not meaning to minimize the worth of the possibilities of the Sunday school as a means of instruction and devotion; I am simply affirming that the church (and I went to both) had far more to do with the making of my soul between the ages of five and ten.

While Sunday school was a buzz, church was keeping silence before God.

Not always was I well behaved, but never was I unmindful of a restraining hand, or a look, that made me conscious that something more than the ordinary was taking place; for I knew that particular look always meant more than that I should obey my mother.

Half of church is the kind of mother that sits by your side.

The silent congregation, the spiritual dynamics of my mother, the earnestness of the minister, the solemn prayers and vows, the reverential reading from the great book. the appeal and lift of the sermon, the manifest effect on the congregation, the stately hymns with their great diapason bass, and at last the benediction with uplifted hand, all conspired to exert formative influences on the making of my soul unlike anything else that ever entered my life.

¶ Never am I more grateful for a mother's sheltering arm and watchful eye beside me in the pew, that were to me, as I now judge, the loving arm and eye of God, than when I see three or four little spiritual orphans wander alone into the church, first to look about with a sense of awe, and afterward to busy themselves in a way that disturbs the congregation.

And the boys and girls who stand at the door waiting for church to end and Sunday school to begin, I know are not properly making their souls.

The proudest thing I wear is a silver knife on my

watch guard, the gift of a little boy seven years old who was so in love with his church and minister that he insisted on making the present with my name engraved.

Children approaching ten are wonderful beings; their accomplishments have already been prodigious, their beings are colored through and through with varied dyes.

By the time he is ten, a child is either a Christian or a pagan.

If he is a pagan, he has been greatly sinned against. His parents, his neighbors, his teachers, and his playmates have done him great harm; they have put a warp in his soul that, like the bow in legs, will be hard to straighten.

¶ During this period the child has a vivid imagination; without one he never could make much of a soul.

He thinks, he experiments, he imitates; he sins, he repents, he believes; and best of all, he loves.

The Scriptures well read in his hearing, the family prayers devoutly offered, the manner in which he is put to bed, the hand that tucks him in, the last words of praise and love, the hope expressed that he will achieve a noble manhood, the God bless you and keep you, the last loving strokes of the forehead and hair, all these things are essential in the making of a soul.

In that atmosphere, the vivid manner in which it all comes back to him, if he has done wrong through the day, resulting in confessions, tears, and prayers, makes night the daytime of the soul.

With body and soul both made clean, he sinks to rest

with these last thoughts and feelings sinking deeper into his soul; thoughts and feelings that work while he sleeps and bring him to the bright new day ready for the next step in the great work of soul-making.

4. Should Children Ten or Twelve Years of Age Join the Church?

¶ In my opinion, they should not join the Church, or be confirmed; but they should be intelligently and lovingly prepared for their *first communion.*

It is a sin against children ten years of age not to give them every possible chance, that is proper, to express and deepen their religious lives.

I warn Churches and parents that they are failing their children when they do not give them specific spiritual help at this important period of their lives.

Children are more like men and women at the age of ten than they will be again until they are well past the period of adolescence.

At ten, they are rounding out the first great chapter in soul-making; and every reasonable opportunity should be given to them to deepen their religious life before the exciting period of adolescence begins.

This is the time when they should be prepared for first communion, receive Bibles from the Church, and in every other possible way be made sensible of the warm and endearing arm of the Church about them.

If they have joined the Church or been confirmed at ten years of age, what has the Church left itself that is

adequate for them in the exciting period of adolescence when it comes?

¶ At fourteen, God hurries up the process of body building; he lays such a wealth of material at the disposal of our boys and girls that they do not know what to do with it.

And because it all tingles with warmth and life, they are tempted to make a grand bonfire of it at once and thus unwittingly burn up much of the material intended for the building of their future lives.

They have now reached the normal time, after more thorough preparation, to join the Church or be confirmed.

At this time of ferment in which they are tossed to and fro by great impulses to become much better or worse, they need something big and commanding, something to give their souls a permanent set in the right direction as they leave childhood forever.

¶ In the old-time revival, the big thing was conversion at the altar with its accompanying memorable, super-ordinary psychic state.

That, however, is largely a thing of the past although no real working substitute for it is in general use.

The inadequate manner of preparing and receiving young people into the Church usually practised among us is pitiful.

Though I am a Congregationalist, yet for the past fifteen years I have conducted a confirmation service for all who come into the church on confession of faith.

Nothing could induce me to omit any detail of their

preparation, or the laying on of hands after the manner of an Episcopal or Roman Catholic bishop.

I count this one of my highest joys in the ministry, and feel glad that I am the bishop when it comes to the laying on of hands and blessing my own spiritual children.

Because they are mine, and because I know them and love them personally, I can bless them as no one else can do it.

It is for no superstitious regard for ritual that I plead, but for some sane and worthy means of bolting firmly together the thought, love, and conscience of youth and the great privileges and realities of the spiritual life.

5. Is It Wise, Kind, or Necessary for God to Ordain That We Must Pass Through a Dangerous Period of Adolescence?

¶ In my opinion, it is—all of these.

But let us first glance over the period of adolescence. From fourteen to eighteen boys and girls are in high school, and come in thinking contact with a vast new world that is intellectual in its makeup.

Their sudden growth is matched in suddenness by their headlong acquaintance with this new and even more bewildering environment.

Whether the wise are fools or the fools wise often becomes for them a perplexing problem; each, by turn, makes a powerful appeal.

The specious tones of the sirens often bid for their attention in cadences that sound beguiling.

In normal youth the physical, naturally first, makes numerous and insistent demands.

With so many new things within the youth's reach for the first time and his acquisitiveness eager to experiment with them all, the invitation of siren voices is often accepted rather than the counter invitations of the voices that call him upward.

¶ The youth now needs fathering quite as much as he needs mothering.

A boy resents his lack of any masculine quality that would distinguish him from a woman.

If his father is traveling the wrong road, the boy in his teens, if not through all his later life, is more likely to follow his father than his mother, notwithstanding the fact that her early influence and training may have been paramount.

The most serious need of the world is for fathers of the right stamp in sufficient numbers to establish a *companion tradition* of the true father to supplement that of the true mother, of whom we have heard so much.

It is pathetic to hear men rave, while walking in the footsteps of sinful fathers, over their good mothers.

Many of these men will do anything for "mother" except the one thing that would give her the most happiness; and that is, to be a good Christian man.

This sorrowful, unfulfilled wish of mothers denied them by their doting sons is one of the painful memories in every minister's experience.

¶ Adolescence is a rapid river, flowing between the lands of youth and maturity.

There are no bridges, and the youth must undertake to swim across at the risk of being carried downstream.

The newly awakened sex impulse is tugging away with him; the choice of a life's calling impends; men and women, good and bad, are exhibiting their lives for imitation; the many forms of youthful pleasure that consume precious time, if nothing worse, are after him; and the easy-going standards of the society in which he lives—all these cry aloud to the youth to come and join them.

In this maelstrom of contending forces the youth must achieve a *will* or go down in ignominious defeat.

Up to fourteen, while he was acquiring the rudiments of a will, his parents have been able to stand in the breach and shelter his soul; but from now on, their part in his salvation must decrease and his own increase.

¶ To achieve the will to high ideals and noble accomplishments is the most central thing in the making of a soul.

Whatever one's gifts or "accomplishments" may be, if he lack the will to choose in the light of reason and achieve according to the urge of conscience, he is a ship on the broad sea of life without a rudder.

A person may be as stubborn as a mule, he may have the human equivalents of all the mule's tricks and persistence, and yet lack that divine thing, a will guided by moral penetration and sound judgment, the very center of a Godlike soul.

A colored minister once made a slip and read, "And Darius thought to set Daniel over the whole realm because he had a good 'spine' in him."

His substituting of spine for spirit made good Scripture, nevertheless.

But the right kind of backbone is as notable for its flexibility as for its rigidity.

Stubbornness, which many mistake for a will, is a backbone without joints; it is a nuisance to the possessor and makes him a nuisance to everyone else.

¶ In his quest after a more fully unfolded soul, every human being must journey over the romantic and dangerous road of adolescence.

This is not simply nor mainly that God may try him, though the experience does try him, but because every other road is too barren; no other road leads through a country that is supplied with ample enough material for a full, rich life.

The too common idea that all dangers and hardships are simply for the purpose of testing us is grossly false.

All incitements to growth ask to be taken as opportunity and present themselves in that hope.

¶ The divine provision for this crisis is a call, deep and profound as eternity.

And fortunate the youth who hears the call! It is deep calling unto deep; the infinite without offering to match the infinite within.

Though the youth can not know all that it means, yet he may be very certain that it is *his* call.

The call may or may not include his vocation. Whether it includes the vocation or not, it is his *call* to a life of definite purpose.

The unfathomed depths to which the ordinary boy or girl may be conscious of a call reminds one inevitably and strongly of Jesus that time in the temple when He became so interested in the deeper voices that He forgot to return home with His parents.

¶ That which perplexes parents, during this period, is their uncertainty whether the growing aloofness of their child means that he is about to take a plunge into the dark, or step forth with a mission to the world.

Whichever it may be, the youth has no desire to proclaim it from the housetop; because a plunge into the dark is the last thing to bear telling, and a mission to the world seems far too presumptuous.

It is *his* secret. He is being born again, and will not cry out until his new birth is fully accomplished.

Whoever is endowed with extra-fine nervous sensitiveness, is headed for either a saint or a devil; he will find it difficult not to be decidedly one or the other.

A friend once asked me, Why is it that a good Christian woman, the mother of two beautiful children, and an accurate organ player, makes you feel nothing when she plays, while a certain dissolute fellow he named, thrills you when he is able to sit at the organ?

¶ The nervous fineness and excitability that made a great musician of this man left him equally susceptible to the influence of drink.

Such a gift as his nervous constitution should have been consecrated to the highest and guarded with the same care that he would have guarded a priceless treasure; but he let it be prostituted to degrading uses.

A nature that can easily thrill and become intoxicated, thrills and becomes intoxicated alike in virtue or vice.

Edgar Allan Poe is a monument of warning to all similarly endowed people.

We pronounce no judgment upon the finer shades of the great Wagner's character, but we can realize what a demon he would have been if he had not tied to a star.

Of course, the cases of Poe and Wagner were exceptional; still the light of the famous shines for the benefit of the obscure.

To cite examples from the ranks of the humble, Martha and Mary were marked types in strong contrast, while the third member of the household, Lazarus, failed to register and is only known as Martha and Mary's brother.

Yet Jesus loved Martha and Mary—and Lazarus.

All types are necessary, and lovable if they respond to the love of the highest. What the type shall be, however, is largely determined by the physical peculiarities from birth, and its usefulness depends upon the cultivation and highest consecration of the type—as experimental psychology clearly shows.

¶ The greatest endowment is coupled to the severest temptations, and attended by the gravest risks.

Many priceless treasures lie at the bottom of the sea.

Fortunate was Felix Mendelssohn to have a father who, though he had no musical gift of his own, was able to recognize the gift of his child and willing to guard it with religious care.

¶ Since all heaven and earth is involved in the making of a soul, God calls on all heaven and earth to do its best to show us in myriad ways that the making of a soul is the combined work of a universe.

6. Are There Temptations Peculiar to Mature Life?

¶ "A good man has forgotten more temptations than a bad man ever knew." Those who fall before the first great temptation in unconditional surrender, may never go on to learn the succession of struggles with the other temptations that fall to the lot of a progressively unfolding soul.

A bad man may remain vexed and almost devoured for a lifetime with the one same old sin, while the person who puts his first arch enemy under his feet moves forward to meet new foes.

For him who masters his temptations one by one as they arise, many of them in the course of time, get buried so far out of sight that they will seldom ever be recalled; and thus it is that the good man has forgotten more temptations than the bad man ever knew.

¶ It is true that many of the worst crimes committed are done by mature people whose characters were supposed to be established.

An old weakness, which had been held at bay but not conquered, came to grips with them again in later life, and under circumstances far more calamitous.

After we have moved into a more commodious environment where we enjoy the confidence of our fellows because of years of faithfulness, circumstances powerless before in our smaller world may set an old enemy up to fight it out with us to the death.

This is why hitherto respectable people go down to failure after so many partial victories that we had come to think them impervious to gross temptations.

Youth knows no grilling situation comparable to those that may arise in mature years.

In these terrific ordeals homes get broken up on grounds that the offending parties never could have dreamed in earlier years were possible.

Money is often misappropriated under circumstances that never occurred in earlier life.

No one knows when changes in his situation may arise that will try him to the utmost.

After graduating from Harvard, a young man entered his father's bank and soon discovered that at the time of his death, his father had been trying to cover up a shortage.

To save the honor of his father's name, the young man began replacing the money as rapidly as possible but felt compelled in the meantime to continue his father's methods of concealing his theft.

The fact of the shortage was discovered, however, and the young man was arrested as a criminal.

No more than this young man can we know what forms of temptation lie before us; neither can we know what temptations some of our fellows encounter; nor at what stage of life any of us may be most severely grilled.

The admission is fatally easy that every sin, not our own, is both foolish and desperately wicked; as fatally easy as to juggle with our consciences and to make out that our sins are not so bad after all, and may be excused on many grounds.

Every temptation involves a live, if not a debatable, situation to the one tempted, and every sin leads to deeper moral degradation and to fiercer temptations.

Not only are we punished for our sins, but we are punished by our sins.

I knew a man who thought his own *social* vice did not much matter, but that those dishonest in money affairs should be sent to prison to the last man.

Another acquaintance of the same stamp, rather loose in his own morals, could not bear the mention of mercy in mitigation of the dastardly conduct of a Sunday school superintendent who, while town treasurer, spent the town's money.

Not being able to surmise what it means to get caught in the toils of that type of temptation, there were no two ways about it for him: the man was a devil, cunningly parading in Christian clothes.

¶ The truth seems to have been that the man was sincere in his religious profession, but having run short of funds in his own business, he foolishly "borrowed" or used the town's money, telling himself it would be easy to replace it before it was needed by the town.

His own business not succeeding as well as expected, he could not return the money. This caused him to borrow money from his neighbors and to launch business schemes in which he had unbounded confidence.

These pet schemes failing, the situation began to be desperate. He happened to have a fertile mind for inventing money-making schemes that were "sure" to succeed; so he embarked on a new enterprise which necessitated the borrowing of more money.

As plan after plan failed, the situation became very much more serious. So, desperately lunging this way and that to get out of the mire, he sank deeper into the quicksand each time.

"But why did the old hypocrite stay at the head of the Sunday school?"

His reasoning was that he could do nothing now to create suspicion or all was lost; his neighbors would be injured and his own reputation blasted.

Yes, his heart ached and his conscience smote; but what could he do, he sighed within himself, but to hope against hope to find a way to avert the disaster of exposure? Nothing better occurred to him but to borrow more money and waste it on more wild schemes.

¶ When the crash finally came, people said he had robbed

the town, and swindled all the trusting widows in the community who had lent him money—and they put him down as a sly, intentional, and unmitigated scoundrel.

Of course, his first act was very wrong and his efforts to remedy it exceedingly foolish and reprehensible; nevertheless, his wrongdoing was less intentional from the start, no one will deny, than the other man's social vice.

They that wish to make a soul must take adequate measures to prepare it for the moral and intellectual strains incident to mature years.

¶ Passing from the grosser sins, we find a far greater host who partially fail in mature years because they prove unequal to other subtler temptations.

There are so many types of competitors, and so many shades of motive are met with in every walk of life.

Success is sweet, and squeamishness over fine shades of motive can be very troublesome and costly at times; so public opinion is quite divided as to how much practical difference these shades of opinion ought to be allowed to make in the conduct of life.

Hence it is that multitudes in middle life, having lost the idealism of school days, fall into the hell of a conventionalized respectability that works great harm to their own souls and to society.

Some seeing, and wishing to avoid, hollowness like this, go to the other extreme for lack of judgment and become wild fanatics in their worship of abstract perfection.

¶ Verily, mature life has its peculiar temptations—to

slow down, let well enough alone and stand pat—and because so many wittingly or unwittingly yield to them, society as a whole sags, statesmanship crumbles, and the world languishes with a moral "dumb ague."

Because these temptations of middle life get their thousands and ten thousands, civilization becomes dreadfully uncivilized; religion has its heart eaten out with a disguised selfishness; the doctors of society fail in their diagnosis, and startling scientific remedies fail to cure.

In the long run it will be found that there is no sound hope of improving these bad conditions except in universal repentance and a return to Christian honesty.

Without neglecting the protection of childhood and adolescence, we must address ourselves more assiduously to the needs of middle life, or finally fail to make a soul that can ward off everything hostile and establish a permanent order of society.

7. Is It a Misfortune to Grow Old?

¶ Yes, it is a misfortune to grow old, but a privilege to grow older.

If life does not become richer and fuller as the years go by, it is bound to become and to be thought less satisfying.

Pity the soul that has become blasé. When freshness and enthusiasm are gone, life is like hunger without taste.

¶ When I was in college, various peripatetics told us that we undergraduates were seeing our best days.

I did not believe it then, and now I know it is not true.

A person of sixty may get more satisfaction out of a day than a youth realizes in a month. A friend said to me not long ago,

"I tell my daughters to get all the pleasure out of school possible for these are the best days they ever will see."

"Oh," said I, "I am telling my daughter that it will be better all the way."

"Well," said the neighbor, "It is a God-send if you can believe it."

She did not realize how true what she said was, but this is just what this belief of mine in regard to the ripening years is, "a God-send."

And God will not fail to send if we are forward to receive.

Proclaim ye it from the housetop: The multitudes are so hot after pleasure, they are missing happiness. Even happiness may not be sought; seek life, and happiness, unsought, will come to dwell with you.

¶ The trouble is that too many people do *not* grow older.

While still children, they assume the privileges and responsibilities of men and women and prove not equal to the situation.

The average person in middle life is not really more than fifteen years old; he has not surpassed in knowledge and self-control a normal youth of that age.

To be fifty years of age and not fifty years old is a calamity.

But what about having to grow old physically?

We could not grow older mentally and spiritually if we did not grow older physically.

Youth is a time to accumulate and not to consolidate.

That plastic and supple period is the time paths are opened up through the nervous system and facility gained in action.

But for that very reason we lack during youth physical maturity and character.

The young musician fails to give his hearers the deepest satisfaction as much from a lack of physical as of mental maturity.

With the coming of age, the body locks up its forms more tightly.

Of course, if nothing has been done to gain facility during youth, the physical system locks up empty.

If there have been evil practices during youth that produce bad tendencies, these remain to torment us.

Contrariwise, however, if we have acquired facility during the formative period in right thought and action, increasing age brings with it maturity, strength, and firmness.

It is a blessing, therefore, that our bodies grow older. ¶ Bodily changes will bring on the time when one can not run as fast as he once did, but he can think faster and stay longer at the things most worth-while if he has properly grown older.

Besides, he does not need to run as fast, now that all the world gets about on wheels.

We should thank God for the privilege of growing mentally and physically older.

I am distressed to find when their answers grow confidential that so many smiling faces hide a bitterness of heart.

Many in number are they who missed the way before they were fairly started. To them life seems by their own confession scarcely worth living.

Verily, "what and why is man?" is a pressing question for our day.

¶ That some of the aged linger for a time after their working vitality is gone is no loss to them, nor to their friends.

When the grain is cut and separated from the straw at the same time, as is now done by modern machinery, something we used to prize is missing; no more ripe shocks of wheat beautify the field and gladden the heart of man.

May the time never come when there are no more old people to abide for awhile like ripe shocks of grain before they are gathered into their Father's house above.

Our Edward Everett Hales and Washington Gladdens and Lyman Abbotts are ample vindication of the wisdom that permits ripe old age, full of personal satisfaction and public benediction, to tarry for awhile after its working strength has abated.

It is a divine wisdom that permits the few to remain a little while at last, in the midst of their children

and children's children, to reveal the glory of a ripened life.

The rising generation needs to know men and women who have followed the gleam so long that the imprint of the light of eternity is beginning to show upon their forward-looking faces.

8. Is Death a Curse Inflicted Because of Man's Sin?

¶ Few things are more certain than that man would have died, physically, even if he had never sinned.

Yet sin's death-toll is and always has been frightful.

Wherever sin is, premature death follows in its wake in the form of unnecessary accidents, of preventable diseases, of hunger and poverty, and of wanton crime; to say nothing of war!

Death is often made horrible and cruel because of sin.

Flying in the face of this knowledge, men still continue to sin, and then blame God for the consequences.

The consideration of those accidental and premature deaths which would occur, even if there were no sin, is left for a later chapter.

¶ Were there no sin, death in most cases would be comparable to falling asleep peacefully at the close of life's beautiful day.

In a world without sin, if you can imagine for a moment what that would be like, death would not come as gloomy night, but like a gorgeous sunset.

Even as it is, deaths of this happy character are in-

numerable. We hear thousands say, "Life has been good, but my work here is about done and I shall be glad to go home."

Without a bit of morbidness about it, Paul was as ready for death as a ripe apple is for separation from the tree.

¶ "If Christians believe what they say about heaven, I should think they would want to die at once."

This familiar taunt sounds full of wisdom to shallow minds, but any one that would hasten off to heaven at once because there are more "goodies" there than here is only fit for some sort of purging fire.

College is better than high school, but only for those who have gone through high school.

Other things being equal, premature death is a loss. No one can enter and enjoy college-heaven circles until he has creditably graduated from the high-school-heaven, regardless of *when* he dies.

Religion as a skeptic understands it, is rarely worthy of belief; as the skeptic understands it, it is usually a travesty of the views held by an enlightened Christian.

¶ Death is not the curse of sin; sin is the curse of death.

Death is the natural exit from a lower to a higher sphere of life.

Death has terrors for the living, but none for the dying.

The certainty and universality of death is a powerful factor in the making of a staunch, true-blue soul.

¶ When a little boy, I was one day digging in the earth when the thought came to me with bewildering force that

some day I might die. I stopped digging and ran to my mother in breathless haste to ask her if I must surely die. And when she replied that I should, I asked, "Will they put me in a hole?" When told that they would put my body in the ground, with great difficulty I gasped, "H-how, could I b-b-reathe?"

¶ The knowledge of death made me ask questions deep as eternity; and the loss of loved ones has opened fountains in my soul that otherwise would never have been tapped.

Never has a family existed that has not been affected in a thousand ways, for better or worse, by the knowledge that death might any day claim one of its number, and that sooner or later it would claim them all.

While death has greatly hurt me, it has wonderfully blessed me too and enlarged my soul.

CHAPTER V

WHY DID GOD MAKE MAN AT ALL?

Is solitary life worth living?

Without children, could God live a rational life?

Without social relations, could God have character?

With Himself as the Sole Inhabitant of the universe, how could God love?

Did God realize how much suffering having a family would cause both Him and them?

¶ We are not belittling God when we say that He needs children; that He could not live His own full life without them.

Though our creation was an act of great love, none the less was it an act in which God served His own interests also.

It is very important for us to realize the existence of this need of God for children because a proper appraisement of man to which it leads is necessary to a proper appraisement of God and the universe.

God is not great because He is a limitless reservoir of passive virtues; like us, He must be judged by His fruits.

God is not good unless He is good for something.

It was a great and noble act, an act worthy of God, to create the universe.

But if He had made it simply for the pleasure of seeing what He could do, and not for the use of moral and intelligent beings, then, instead of glorifying, He would have stultified Himself.

For the universe without people to live in it and to turn it to spiritual uses, is of no account; and without children to share His universe and His plans, *God* is useless.

Of course, these conclusions would not hold if it can be shown that He is an end in Himself, and that He could live happily and worthily in eternal solitude with no thought of anyone or anything but Himself. Nothing is more certain, however, than that such an idea defames God.

¶ There have been periods in the past when men thought God capable of finding complete moral and personal satisfaction within Himself; and that He would be justified, if He so chose, in living a self-centered life throughout all eternity.

One of the principal things that Jesus did was to correct this scandalous idea concerning His Father.

¶ Yet, sad to say, that idea refuses to die out, for it is still held by many of our contemporaries.

People not a few survive who belong to the older generations which thought that everything God does is of "grace," and not of duty; whereas, every act of God is a deed of love *and* duty.

It is a child's idea that "big folks" can do what they please without any regard to others.

In asserting the contrary of God, we do not mean of course, that He has to learn what His duty is by consulting us; His sense of duty rises out of His own wisdom and love.

¶ We insist on emphasizing how much man needs God, but we forget or pass over lightly how much God needs man.

God is not a placid, self-contained sea of bliss; He is a Father, with a Father's need of children, and not only a Father's love, but a Father's sense of obligation.

To answer the question, Why did God create man?, we only need to consider what God could do or be or how He could get on without him.

1. Is Solitary Life Worth Living?

¶ No, not even for God.

A reasonable measure of solitude is good; but God is no more deprived of solitude by living in the midst of His children than they are deprived of it by living together.

The solitude of genius, about which we have heard so much, is nothing in comparison with the solitude of the All-Wise.

Even when men are most receptive, God is able to share with them but an infinitesimal part of His thought.

He longs to share more; and He will be able to do so when we have become wiser and better.

It is true that when we are nervous and irritable, or numbed by steady contact with others to a low state of sensibility, we crave complete isolation for a brief period.

Yet the charm of our isolation is largely in the fact that we have withdrawn a little from something that we love; from something to which we may soon return with a fresh vigor and new joy, as we return to the exertion of toil from the rest of sleep.

Of eternal solitude, we have not even tasted a sip.

One moment of isolation which was even thought to be eternal, would be a moment of terror; a moment of black despair.

It would be far more bearable for us to live with devils than to live absolutely alone forever.

It is not irreverent to say that God Himself would be in despair if He could not create children with whom He could live and work.

¶ Intervals of solitude are different.

Many of us need more spells of solitude than we are willing to take; solitude for meditation and prayer, solitude in which to plan life and work; solitude that is a respite from distracting cares.

Jesus set us a good example in His use of solitude as in all other things.

Wholesome and well-timed solitude gives us a profounder sense of ourselves and the blessedness of the great social life from which we have temporarily withdrawn.

Occasional separation from our friends and interests

puts them in a better perspective, and enables us to correct many false tendencies that escape us when we are engrossed in our work.

Social service workers require a great deal of solitude; a great amount of time for private thinking and planning.

To superficial people, isolation is simply a weariness and a dreariness; but to those who are deeply engrossed with things worth while, a little solitude may be sweet as balm and profound as eternity.

For man, restful, meditative solitude is but the complement of the social activity which makes his life a rounded whole.

And God, we may believe, is at once the most solitary and the most social being in the world.

If either of these elements indeed were lacking in Him, we could not reverence Him as God.

As God's children develop, they, too, find that their life in solitude deepens as their life in social contact widens.

This is one of the beautiful paradoxes characteristic of all deep, rich life.

Man's service to God includes more than praise and good-will; it means that we are a real help; a kind of help without which God would be handicapped at every turn of His life.

2. Without Children, Could God Live a Rational Life?

¶ At first thought, it seems as if God might live a

rational life, strictly that and nothing more, even if He were perpetually alone.

He did live a rational life before He created children; but that life was rational because it was more than that, for He had children in mind in all that He did.

When God had made the material universe precisely as it is, if He could have gone no farther, immediately the unwisdom back of His works could not have been concealed; for there would be no worthy use, on that supposition, to which the universe could have been put.

Without others to share it with Him, the universe would have been nothing more than a magnificent toy in His hands.

If it be argued that nevertheless God would have found enjoyment in it, we should prefer to do without a God rather than to believe in *such* a God.

The idea that God could happily amuse Himself through eternity with a mammoth toy, carries with it no pleasant trains of thought.

If God had no children, or if He should finally lose them all, then anything else that God had done or might do would possess no rational significance beyond His own entertainment.

I once heard a prominent college professor say that He did not know that God was under any obligation to him to preserve his life either here or hereafter.

The professor was right—if God is simply amusing Himself.

Jesus, however, would have spurned such a conception

of God; His Father cared, and felt infinitely obligated to look after the welfare of His children.

The real God, the God of Jesus, needs the professor; and before He gets through with him, something much too valuable to lose will be made out of him.

¶ God could not continue to live a rational life without putting His universe after its making, to its appropriate rational and spiritual uses.

Wonderful as the universe must have been as a spectacle before it was used, it is infinitely more wonderful in use; in use to advance the highest social and spiritual ends.

It is the worst of nonsense to think that God can live a truly rational life without children.

What would be thought of a person who would build a great manufacturing plant and when it was done, be done himself, never peopling it with operatives?

Yet such a deed would be a mild form of insanity compared with the making of a *universe* that could be put to no use.

How is it possible for anyone to doubt that God needs children to make His own life worth while?

If God fails *us* we are lost; and if His children universally fail *Him,* He is ruined.

One child among so many may seem to us of little consequence, but without ones there are no manys.

To continue to live a rational life God not only needs children for company, but children that are increasing in wisdom and goodness.

Therefore, He must not, while we are in the early stages of our apprenticeship, cut us off, or permit us to perish.

¶ Nor will God ever put this universe to its highest uses if His helpers live but for the brief span of this life.

There would be no wisdom in dismissing the skilled helpers who have had a generation of training and giving the preference to an endless succession of beginners.

There is no wisdom in repeated rounds without progress; wisdom marches in the direction in which it set out and finishes what it begins.

The moral weight of the universe rests on the shoulders of both God and His helpers. This is reason enough why God made man at all.

3. Without Social Relations, Could God Have Character?

¶ Without social relations, it is difficult to see how God could have anything resembling character.

In the first place, His own life would be rendered useless; in the second place, rational life would become impossible for Him.

If man has not the right of self-mutilation, much less has God such a right.

To prefer perpetual isolation for the sake of ease and selfish enjoyment would be much more unworthy of God than it is of frail human beings; and it is very sinful for them.

Goodness through isolation is one of the wicked heresies that has too often cursed the church and the race.

Despite all this, some still think that God could have remained good in perpetual solitude and idleness.

Nothing could be more contrary to the teachings, or to the example of Jesus who went about doing good. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work. . . . The Father in me doeth His works."

¶ I was introduced to a man once who fawned on me in a patronizing way as "a good man," and informed me that persons employed as I was, and possibly some women, might be Christians because we were protected by our innocence and isolation; but that red-blooded men like himself who lived in the real world and came in contact with people who do business and with the rank and file of the body social, could not possibly be Christians.

I told him that any minister who was such a contemptible thing that this description fitted him, deserved to be spoken to in such a manner.

If such ministers exist, they are already damned by their imbecility.

¶ The minister worth his salt earnestly grapples with the sins of all professions, of all trades, of every social strata, with his own temptations in relation thereto; and when he is through with these, finds his personal sins awaiting his attention.

He knows the meaning and strain of real life, and least of all men deserves to be regarded as a denatured man.

Any minister who has been sheltered from gaining a knowledge of the strain and temptations of life, as well as its joys, is neither good enough nor wise enough to be a minister that any intelligent community would want.

I informed the gentleman who patronized me, that such an isolated fool as he had just described had been deprived of his chance to become a good man; that there is no such thing as goodness apart from red-blooded relations with men and the world generally; that if only he knew it, he himself was by reason of the mixture of his contacts with the world in a most favorable position to win a good character.

¶ Can anyone conceive of a good God who does not mind the fact that He does not know anyone, and who has nothing to do consequently with anybody but Himself?

It is true that some theologians of the past went so far as to teach that God could turn His back on the whole struggling, sinful race if He desired, and still be inexpressibly holy; that to anyone whose parents had sinned, His holiness put Him under no obligation; that His own glory and pleasure were all that need concern Him; that everything beyond stern justice was a condescending kindness on His part and not a duty.

Today, we should consider such a God dreadfully wicked; even more wicked than human beings who stand aloof from their struggling, sinning, and suffering brothers.

¶ Destroy vital, personal relations, and opportunity for a character is gone.

Character is companionability, for it means doing the right thing by ourselves and others, whoever the others may be.

No greater contempt could be heaped upon God than to say that He does not care for His children nor feel under obligation to them.

He would then be more recreant than those delinquent parents who are brought before our civil courts for the neglect of their children.

If God were that kind of a being, men would be justified in feeling more like hurling curses at Him than offering prayers.

A good man, or a good God, without vital social relations! Such a portrait is a burlesque, a travesty.

Say that children, on the other hand, are necessary to God's own character, and we have a decidedly new sense of man's worth and of the reason why God created him.

4. With Himself as the Sole Inhabitant of the Universe, How Could God Love?

¶ Love is commonly regarded as one of the most beautiful and fundamental attributes of God. "God is love."

But could God be love if He had no one to love but Himself?

Self-love is very proper and beautiful, but he who does not love others does not worthily love himself.

Even if God could have *enjoyed* Himself in perpetual

solitude—but that is unthinkable—such enjoyment would have been a selfish pleasure and not love.

Everyone is under obligation to love himself; being his Father's son and his brother's brother, he is of priceless value to them as well as to himself.

He deserves to be appreciated and treated as well at his own hands as God's other sons.

Jesus was careful to say that we should love others as we love ourselves.

Very appropriately, this has been called by everybody the "golden rule."

I believe that God loves others as He loves Himself, and that His self-love is infinite; God strictly keeps the golden rule; He is the only one who does keep it perfectly.

The golden rule came out of the heart of God; and without the golden rule in His heart He would not be God.

¶ Some folks would have us believe that it is a virtue to love others more than self; but this is one of the unconscious vices of sentimentality.

True love will sacrifice its immediate comforts and even physical life, if necessary, for the well-being of others; but to sacrifice the higher self for others would be to betray that higher self and to sin both against others *and* one's self. Things are not run on that plan.

If Paul's statement, "I could almost wish myself accursed from the presence of God for my brethren's sake," were not hyperbole, it was decidedly morbid.

Just the opposite course was necessary for him to take, if he was to be of any use to his brethren. The more intelligently he sacrificed for his brethren, the dearer would he be to them, to God, and to himself.

Any sacrifice that does not make your own soul big, is either a foolish sacrifice or a sacrifice with a low motive.

¶ An anxious wife was trying in my presence to persuade her husband to become a Christian.

He contended that all human choices were based on selfishness; that no one acted, even in religion, without a selfish motive.

"Now James," said his wife, "You know that is not true."

"Yes," said he, "I am convinced that all conduct in its last analysis rests on selfishness."

Then they appealed to me to settle the question between them.

"Oh well," said I, "I suppose he means enlightened selfishness.

"Enlightened self-interest includes altruism, just as enlightened altruism includes self-interest.

"We will not find fault with the Lord because he has so made us that when we seek the highest good of all, we find, all things considered, our own greatest good; we could hardly love the Lord or anyone else if things were not thus made.

"Ignorant self-interest is sin both against ourselves and others, and makes the true love of either ourselves or

others impossible; whereas, the true love of self and the true love of others, will make us begrudge no sacrifice that is necessary under the circumstances for the highest good of all.

"This is the very reason that Jesus chose to die for the world that He loved; in so doing He not only blessed the world, but at the same time exalted Himself above every other creature.

"The highest good of all, Himself included, constrained Him to decide that it would be better to die than to break faith with Himself, His God, and His neighbors."

"Oh, of course," said the man, "I mean *enlightened* selfishness."

¶ A neighbor came into my home a few weeks after this incident and said, "Did you hear Mr. —— at the mass meeting last night? Everybody is wild over the speech he made."

When I asked what it was all about, she explained that the meeting had been called to act upon a proposal to make a large appropriation of money for some public enterprise, and that he (this same husband) had spoken so impressively in its favor from the standpoint of "Enlightened Selfishness" that his speech was the talk of the town.

¶ There are few subjects on which the public stands more in need of sound instruction than the relation between genuine altruism and true self-love.

Nothing less than a crystal-clear sense of values, resting on the best knowledge obtainable of how everything

is related, and a clearer vision of the true goal of life is fitted to serve as an adequate basis for worthy altruism or worthy self-love.

The mind content with low ends and loose relations, and with seeing small values in best things, knows not the meaning of divine love.

Sometimes, selfish people under great emotional excitement will do a generous deed that is surprising; but when the exciting cause of the emotion is gone, all higher sense of vision goes too, and naturally they lapse into their accustomed selfishness.

Unless there is a reason for it, there is no occasion for being generous.

¶ Since the goals that we set ourselves are usually very insignificant and very near at hand, our knowledge of how things are related pretty meager, our sense of values very faulty, our love at best is little more than the simple rudiment of love.

But because God knows all relations and all goals, and because He appreciates best things most, His love is true, boundless, and inexhaustible.

And wherever true love is, it expresses itself in appropriate deeds.

For the reasons above stated, God's love is the only perfect love; it is the love that cheerfully faces all necessary pain and sorrow; the love that sees and endures forever.

The best we can do, or hope to do, is to follow on to know Him who is love.

When we know why God *loves,* and feel the same kind of love growing in our hearts, life is transformed from top to bottom, from center to circumference.

That is why an obscure Christian washer-woman will give generously out of her hard earnings, and find joy over steaming suds; and not knowing why God loves also explains why a society belle will become completely absorbed in her race for prominence and experience bitter heartburnings in her giddy social rounds.

Divine love is the essence of all true life; and it draws all reality to a focus.

5. Did God Realize How Much Suffering Having a Family Would Cause Both Him and Them?

¶ Much pain and sorrow would have been avoided if none of us had ever been born.

There is no reason however for thinking that human suffering has been a surprise to God.

Sometimes we hear it said that Jesus knows our sorrows and temptations better than God because He lived in the flesh; but in Jesus, God Himself lived in the flesh.

God was perfectly familiar with nerves for untold ages before any human being was born; all the suffering of the animal world was His to see and feel.

God made nerves, and knew what He was making. Before man came, He was very familiar with the cry of pain. He who made nerves knew what they were good for as well as how they could hurt.

A painless world would be neither safe nor joyous. Of all this we shall speak in a later chapter.

We shall only touch upon the query here whether suffering was a surprise to God, and if not whether it should have restrained Him from creating a human family.

There is no reason for thinking that God enjoys pain, or that He is indifferent to the suffering either of His children or of animals.

God would equally hold Himself or a man guilty of a great crime if wanton pain were inflicted by their agency upon man or beast. All necessary suffering has great value. But malicious persons may take advantage of this capacity to suffer and gratify their lust for cruelty. ¶ Life itself involves a measure of suffering both for God and man; and yet, the end of the story more than justifies that suffering.

The inference is not warranted from what has been said, that life is a nightmare; for in the present stage of our existence, the joyous note rises above the din of sin and sorrow.

As I write, there are many things that cause my heart to ache; yet, happy to say, there are more things to make me glad.

Though life at its present stage is good, on the whole very good, yet it is no more than a foretaste of what it shall yet be.

¶ God does not abandon a good enterprise because of any suffering that it may involve.

Much as we dislike pain, we ourselves gladly undertake many things that we know will involve hardships and see them through without complaint.

Before my own children came, I knew that their coming would bring joys and sorrows; nevertheless I sincerely wanted them; I felt sure that they would make up for all the suffering that might come to them and me.

The event turned out just as I anticipated; the pain, the sorrow, and the joy came by turns; but I am satisfied.

Because we have rejoiced together and suffered together, we are somehow happier and stronger.

Once a spell of pain has passed, we have always been conscious of a richer love and that our hold on life and everything that is worth while was firmer.

It was quite the best thing, I am sure, for me to anticipate the sorrow as well as the joy before my children came; instead of being surprised and embittered when the suffering came, I was prepared to meet it.

God, too, must have anticipated, on an infinitely higher plane, the joy and the suffering incident to having a family.

Although He knew from the beginning that life involved a measure of suffering, yet for that reason alone He could not refuse us existence and leave Himself forever childless, isolated, and defeated.

Companionship with the divine thing called a soul was of such priceless value to God and would be to these souls themselves, once they were created, that nothing short of anticipated apostasy from Him, final and com-

plete, could have deterred Him from creating the human family.

¶ I have often felt like sheltering my children from the hard circumstances that are necessary for the making of a soul; and yet in my deepest heart, I do not want the kind of children that can be too easily made; I have seen too many of the "easily made" kind to think well of the method.

Suffering with no legacy of blessing to show for it is a calamity, but suffering that helps us to know, to love, and to get a firmer grasp on reality is a great blessing.

Life that is of the right quality, that is Godlike, is worth any price that may be put upon it.

¶ Of course, those who think of God as cold and remote, as one who is enjoying Himself far apart while His children cry and suffer, naturally feel bitter toward Him.

¶ If I shared their idea of God with them, I too should feel bitter.

Let those who cling to such a false and contemptible view of God go to Jesus and learn a totally opposite view of what their Father is like; let them go to school also with Paul and learn through heroic suffering and faithful service that God goes to prison, to the executioner's block, and to the cross with every son and daughter who dies for His and for the world's sake.

God asks His children to go nowhere that He is not already present and waiting to share with them His pain and glory if they will come.

¶ Occasional suffering for every one of us, as we our-

selves can see, is valuable because it makes us feel His special nearness.

Nowhere else can God get quite so near to us as in our deepest sorrow.

Suffering for suffering's sake should never be sought, for if we live as true sons and daughters, enough of it will fall to our lot in the common events and duties of life.

Blind, selfish suffering is indescribably sad, and altogether unnecessary if we are willing to be taught in the school of Jesus.

¶ It is not difficult to understand how a sinful, untaught, and stricken soul might fall under such a cloud of sorrow as to desire extinction itself; and it is not surprising to see such a soul pass from under the cloud and thank God for the horrifying shadow that drove him to the dazzling light that now bursts upon his wondering gaze.

In a world like ours, all these things occur; and the mature Christian knows why.

¶ Our worshipful adoration should go out to the God who made us to be the companions of His suffering and the heirs of His glory.

We congratulate all mankind on its membership in God's family; on the glorious end thus set before them to be achieved; on their rich fellowship with kindly brothers and a loving Father in an enterprise vast as the universe and long as eternity.

God lures us, and necessity spurs us, to move onward and upward along the paths that lead to a social order

where each shall live for all and all shall live for each; where swine pens and husks shall be no more in God's fair world.

In that day, which is coming, we shall exclaim, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of multitudes!"

¶ What is man? He is the son of the Highest.

Why did God create him? That he might have dominion over the works of His hands; that he might love and be loved; that he might be a co-worker with his Father, in the upbuilding and maintenance of a glorious and everlasting kingdom.

Man was created in order that he might fulfill God's life, his own life, and the life of his neighbor.

CHAPTER VI

WHY WERE WE NOT BORN IN HEAVEN?

Was any one ever born in heaven?

Would a perfect heaven be a good place in which to begin life?

Is this earth an ideal place in which to begin life?

Was a soul, bound by no genealogical ties to nature, ever created apart from nature?

If God has dealt fairly with us, why do we complain of our lot?

¶ Some think that God has Angel-children who were born in His highest heaven.

Then why were we discriminated against? Why were we required to pass through this sinful, sorrowful world if others were spared such an experience?

¶ We once thought that all suffering was either due to man's sin, or else it was caused by the evil work of devils.

Nothing unpleasant, with the exception of the unpleasantness connected with just punishment, ever came from God.

Consequently, before man sinned, the earth was a

perfect paradise. Before God cursed the earth and the race for the sinfulness of the first man and woman, there were no weeds, no briers, no fierce animals, no sickness, no sorrow, no death.

If this were true, then Adam and Eve were born in what might very appropriately be called a heaven; and it was not God's original intention that any of us should be born in a world of suffering.

¶ But there are a thousand reasons for believing that the earth never was such a paradise.

Millions of years before man appeared, earth was the abode of fierce carnivorous animals, and the scene of sickness, pain, and death; there were going on in it destructive earthquakes, terrific cyclones, and devastating floods.

¶ It makes a most unlikely story to say that God would curse the earth and all the billions of people that were to be born upon it because Adam and Eve disobeyed Him in a single act.

The Christian sense of justice openly insists that God should have settled the account with Adam and Eve alone.

If they had proved themselves unfit to be the progenitors of the race, they might have been deposed first and then disposed of in any way that the Lord thought best, and a new pair created that would beget an angelic race worthy to inhabit the Eden Home which this theory claims the earth was in the beginning.

¶ All this, however, is beside the mark, for whether or

not God has angel-children in heaven who never knew what suffering was like, it is certain that life on this earth always included suffering apart from sin.

Sin, beyond all doubt, adds other suffering of its own.

The old explanations of our sufferings that laid them all at the door of sin were an honest effort to vindicate the character of God; and so far, they were worthy.

But now we see that such mistaken explanations injure rather than vindicate His character.

That does not change our admiration for these noble men who toiled to lift men's thought of God from lower to higher ethical levels through the ages.

Their conception of a God that was good and kind was a marvelous advance over the thought current in their times of malevolent gods.

Only by doing some pioneering work of our own with the same thoroughness, and in the same spirit that they did theirs, shall we make ourselves their worthy heirs.

1. Was Any One Ever Born in Heaven?

¶ Did any one ever grow up where there was no suffering, no temptation, no sin? We are not Gods to know all, but the more we learn of this universe, the more improbable it becomes that any one was ever born in a place where he could grow to maturity with no knowledge of sin and sorrow.

In my youth, I often heard it preached that angels were beings who had spent all their existence with God in heaven where they had no knowledge of sin and death;

that these pure beings listened to the story of sin and redemption as to something foreign, with a mystified awe; that they were capable and trusty messengers whom God could safely send to earth, or anywhere else, on teaching missions, on errands of mercy, or on punitive errands of destruction.

When I was a boy the grown-ups around me thought that in olden times angels frequently came to earth in visible form. But if they did, they appear to have ceased doing so long ago.

At the present time, many people believe that angel spirits still come in an invisible way to earth.

There are those who think that, in addition to visitations which they receive from good and bad angels, the spirits of their departed loved ones return to communicate with them.

I am heartily in favor of investigating all spiritualistic phenomena, but the more I study spiritualism the less I believe in it.

I find it very hard to believe, with such evidence as we have, that spirits, good or bad, ever came from other worlds to comfort or tempt people on earth.

What we all do know is that the memories of our departed loved ones are so deeply part and parcel of ourselves as to make them a very powerful factor in our lives.

They are none the less dear and influential because they are separated from us.

Even Jesus told His disciples that it was better for

them that He should go away; and assured them that if He did go away, the spirit of God working in their hearts would teach them over again all that He had taught them.

In proof of this is the well-established fact that the words of Jesus spoken on earth did a more powerful work in the disciples' hearts after their Master's death than they did before.

How often the same thing has proved true of some wife or mother after her going.

¶ Every intelligent person, regardless of the place in which he begins to live, is simply a child of God and a brother of all other intelligent beings.

And to begin life higher up than the very beginning, even if such a thing were possible, would be a misfortune.

There is no reason for doubting that many intelligent beings have begun their existence elsewhere than on this earth, considering the nature and vastness of the material universe.

But it is not likely that any of them ever sprang into fullness of life in a single birth moment.

Or that they achieved character without more or less temptation and struggle.

Everything we know cries out against the possibility and desirability of such a thing.

¶ Furthermore, it is reasonable to suppose impartiality has ruled and that all of God's children have been given the great privilege of a beginner's chance; if not, they have missed something.

To begin life with a finished character, in a finished home, would appear to be little short of an intellectual and moral calamity.

No chance to take part in the making of one's self and no opportunity to share in the making of the place in which one lives, are the last things imaginable to be desired.

If the universe contains those who have been compelled to live such a life, they deserve our profound sympathy, if not our pity.

¶ I do not think that the book of Revelation, rightly understood, undertakes to throw light on the heavenly home awaiting us beyond; but if it does, then a war which it describes in heaven makes the recent world war look in comparison like children playing with fire crackers.

For, according to it, Michael and his angels fought the devil and his angels and cast them out of heaven; and a great red dragon drew a third of the stars of heaven with his tail and cast them down to earth.

Even without taking this record as a literal description of the sins and wars occurring in heaven, we may feel certain that character was never won by anybody without effort.

¶ Notwithstanding millenniums of civilization have improved conditions on earth for those who are favorably situated, yet all our children still find it a good stiff proposition to win a character.

For, though civilization offers great advantages, at the

same time it offers a thousand forms of temptation to the inexperienced, not known to primitive society.

Wherever beginners are experimenting there will doubtless be some failures, and evil will develop side by side with the good.

This earth will never be the permanent home of those who were born here, for it is only a seed bed in which to begin life.

The same thing is likely true of any other place where life has ever begun.

It is not likely that anyone, anywhere, was ever born in his final dwelling place.

It is more reasonable and agreeable to suppose that all people who are born in this universe begin as we did, run a natural course of life, and at death will be transferred to such environments as will best suit their moral achievements.

In comparison with what our race has made of this earth home, probably there are many places in this universe, by this time, which would seem to us perfect and finished; the likelihood is also strong, however, that no place nor any heaven will ever be completely finished.

Through all eternity, as the children of God advance, their heavens will keep step and deepen, widen, and improve.

The grounds of expectation that this may be true set before us for our encouragement the most attractive vision and the noblest hope.

2. Would a Perfect Heaven Be a Good Place in Which to Begin Life?

¶ I do not think so.

If it were possible, it would not be well to be a man who had not gone through childhood, to be a sage who had not had to struggle his way up as a pupil, nor to be a saint who had been excused from any and all acquaintance with temptation and sin.

The best place to begin is at the beginning.

A perfect heaven would make a poor starting place; it would be quite too far advanced.

To settle newly created beings in the highest heaven would be dangerous; they would soon do something foolish and dreadful.

A heaven in which he could not get hurt would give a child no chance at all.

Of nothing can you learn the full meaning until you gain acquaintance with its opposite.

A child's fondness for its mother has little more meaning than its fondness for candy until the child learns that "love suffereth long and is kind."

Cruel hate is the proper background for profound appreciation of love, discord for discerning the peacefulness of harmony, sorrow for tasting the blithesomeness of joy, weakness for sensing the ardor of strength, and death for feeling the exhilaration of life.

No place that afforded an opportunity for learning these

things could be in the state of heaven, as we think of it, but would be simply this life over again.

Conversely, any place that did not furnish beginners a chance to learn these contrasts, whether called heaven or by any other name, would doom them to an insipid life in a foundling's home.

¶ When we sigh for the privilege of beginning life in a place from which all suffering and sin is walled out, one filled with things only pretty and pleasant, we know not what a dreadful thing it is that we wish.

God is too good to make His beginners sick on too much heaven because they cry for it; and too wise to let them degrade a heaven which has been built up by ages of toil and care by settling them in it at the start.

This is not to say that sin is good or that pain is pleasant; but it is to say that goodness is real only when it has repelled sin, and that happiness is joy only after we have banished that which causes suffering.

Not to complain of our lot, but to set about improving it, is the part of wisdom.

3. Is This Earth an Ideal Place in Which to Begin Life?

¶ If we are to be made fit to live forever, I am thoroughly convinced that there could be no better place than this earth in which to begin.

If we are to become like Jesus and God our Father, then this earth, or some place like it, affords us our best chance.

In a world like this we find reality in its rawest form; we find the meaning of things nearest the surface.

In a world like this, the meaning of desires and the consequences of sin are most easily and quickly learned.

¶ Though I have gone through many rigorous experiences and have learned some pieces of wisdom pretty thoroughly, yet I have often noticed that when things become too easy and pleasant for me, I begin to degenerate.

Success is relative, and some would think that I have not had overmuch of it, yet I have had about all the prosperity that I could turn to profit.

Some may learn the meaning, the value, and the right use of things in a comparatively easy school, but I can not; I need to be hurt a good deal before I find the deeper meaning to many sides of life.

My experience with those who have had an easy time is not reassuring; I always find them lacking in something greatly to be desired.

The difference in results, between taking easy lessons and hard lessons in the school of life on earth is well worth the difference in price.

¶ True, many people appear to be harmed or even ruined by suffering; but some people let themselves be injured by anything and everything.

They have never caught the real meaning of life, that is their trouble; they think that the thing to do is to get, to be made comfortable, and to be amused—seeking their ease as the chief thing; even that they fail to find.

We were put here to find meaning upon top of meaning to life, and the pleasures and sorrows incident to our environments are well suited to that end.

Even Jesus, with His superior endowments and the incomparable voluntariness of His will to learn, found suffering as well as happiness a means of perfecting His life.

Suffering is not the main thing, but it is an undertow that helps to draw us into the mighty deep of God's life.

God Himself would be imperfect if He did not know the meaning of suffering.

Once again we say, suffering should never be sought for its own sake; that is unnecessary, for if we do not break faith with God and men, plenty of it will fall to our lot that is not of our seeking.

¶ It is a pleasure for me to testify that all necessary suffering, which I have borne in a Christian way, has brightened and gladdened my life.

Because of that course of training, when I listen to grand oratorio, I can hear the clashing forces of right and wrong, of joy and sorrow, of hope and despair; I can hear the note of victory rising high and clear above all discord until I feel safe and satisfied; I have the key to what it all means, the hatefulness of the evil and the loveliness of the good, and am confident of the victorious outcome. The harmonious sounds mean something more to me than mere harmonious sounds; they mean the strain of a vast life bursting into more lovely,

satisfying life; the life that we are already beginning to live, and the greater fullness of life for which we pray.

It means rich reward to know that suffering has made one glad and rich, and full of imperishable hope.

In so far as we have learned our life lesson, the same experience comes to us whichever way we turn.

We may turn to music, to art, to education, to the history of civilization, or to our own small personal world; but wherever we take our soundings, deep final harmony and sure victory is the report that comes up from the deeps as the end of the tragedy, the love, the hate, the hope connected with life's beginnings.

¶ After all our losses and crosses, not simply does life remain, but it has been greatly enriched and all things become ours in a better and larger way than ever before.

It is infinitely better to rise *to* heaven through a reasonable amount of struggle and pain, than to fall *from* heaven by reason of too much ease and pleasure; it is better to win heaven through much tribulation than to settle down in a fool's paradise.

4. Was a Soul, Bound by No Genealogical Ties to Nature, Ever Created Apart From Nature?

¶ It is not likely that any soul was ever created apart from nature.

Every life is doubtless a user of energy and therefore must be planted in energy; it must be planted in God whose energy is the substance of all things.

And if a soul begins and remains enmeshed in God's organized and ever organizing energy, then it begins in what we call nature and in nature it must forever remain.

God Himself does not live apart from His own energy, but forever expresses Himself in it and through it.

Nature may assume many forms, it may undergo many refinements, but it must remain nature forever in distinction from the self-conscious *Will* that projects it in time and space.

God as Mind and Energy is doubtless the ground and environment of every individual life, no matter what its location.

If this be true, then every personal life has a visible beginning in the ties that bind it to what we call nature.

If God Himself does not sever all ties and separate Himself from His cosmic energy, how could a soul be born separate and apart, and live?

¶ While there is endless variety in the universe as we have already said, nevertheless, underneath is a similarity also that runs through it all.

How could it be otherwise if everything is composed in the last analysis of larger or smaller bundles of the energy that comes from God.

However diverse the forms with which they are associated, however different their appearances, yet in reality all souls must be much the same in constitution. Doubtless all finite life has been developed from what might be called seed; and all seed is planted in and draws its

growth from the universe store of the cosmic energy which God supplies from His own person.

The story of life everywhere must be similar if it is life like in kind to that of God and of us.

God is not divided against Himself; He is not running a multiverse, but a universe; however He may differentiate the parts, they do not cease to be parts of the whole and closely related to one another.

¶ The creation of a spirit anywhere could hardly have been a first step; but the crowning act of innumerable acts that went before and led up to it.

As there was a marvelous preparation for the awakening of our spirits, so we reason there must have been for all spirits.

When a spirit first wakes to consciousness there must be the groundwork of space-filling energy beneath him, above him, and about him if he is to live and grow.

An angel spirit in a vacuum would be a stupid spirit; and if he were bound by no connecting links with the universe, would he not be in a vacuum?

All spirits, I dare to believe, find that their very existence depends upon unbroken contact with some form of God's universe store of energy.

If there are spirits who never lived on earth, none the less, they must have begun their existence in that universe of which the earth is a part.

This means that they must have had, like ourselves, a very humble beginning; they must have developed grad-

ually through some effort of their own as well as by the help of God; but that their first knowledge of God must have come through active forces of God which forced themselves upon their acquaintance.

¶ When we wish to get away from the universe, we unwittingly desire to get away from "the everlasting arms."

The more I see of nature the more convinced I am that it is one great multifarious energy side of God Himself.

Instead of wishing to get away from it, I long to remain in it that I may help to transform it by extending my connections with it into one great multifarious energy side of me and all my brothers; that God and all of us working together may make of it a heavenly home, in which and through which God and all His children may become one happy family.

Nature does not veil God, it unveils Him.

In the light with which the spirit of God illuminates our hearts, nature becomes the face of God.

As long as a shred of the universe remains to me, I shall cling to it as the ground of my existence, and as the hand of a loving Father extended to me.

If in respect to anything this attitude should seem offensive, it is simply because, in my opinion, the person finding it so does not rightly conceive of God; he has stripped Him of His great attribute of Almighty Energy.

God is in nature now, and always will be.

If God should cease to be in nature, He would cease to be in His own energy; and if nature should cease to

be, God would allow one of His infinite attributes to remain dormant.

¶ It is for this reason that all personal life begins in nature, continues in nature, and will forever remain in nature.

I do not claim that God has no power left, over and above the energy stored in the visible universe; for His spirit is able to quicken our spirits and to make nature progressive by reshaping it forever.

It is impossible for me to believe in anything less or to hope for anything better.

Though we have had to become familiar with struggle and pain, yet I can not believe that God is guilty of favoritism; or that any other group of His children has fared better unless they have lived better in the presence of temptation.

All suffering that is not due to sin, performs a useful part in the making of a life.

And like all good parents, God willingly consents to suffer with His children to any extent that is necessary for their good.

Some parents amaze me by speaking of one child as their favorite.

Such parents are beyond my comprehension. The wayward and disappointing child can not give the same satisfaction, of course, but he is not loved less by true parents; like the defective or unfortunate child, he draws heavily upon their thought and compassion.

We may be sure that His children who are in His

most beautiful heaven are beloved of God, but that He loves, not less, His ragged children in the slums of our cities; and that He will suffer with them until they are exalted to His highest heaven.

5. If God Has Dealt Fairly with Us, Why Do We Complain of Our Lot?

¶ Not everyone does; many of the greatest sufferers do not complain.

Sometimes we find the most cheerful and generous souls among those who are greatly afflicted.

While some of us complain too much, others of us are too much contented; we do little or nothing to make conditions better for ourselves and others.

A noble, uncomplaining discontent is a religious virtue.

We should not be satisfied with past efforts nor with past conditions.

A Christian's lot yesterday may have been all right for yesterday, but it is not all right for tomorrow.

The future must be a bright new edition of the past.

This divine, forward-looking spirit would be one impossible to sustain if our lot could not be improved.

Those who insist that they ought to be allowed to settle down into soft nests are the ones who become the chronic complainers.

No position that we have yet attained, or that we ever shall acquire, is a safe resting place.

All have hard circumstances to contend with occasion-

ally, and some find life hard most of the time; yet much of the world's suffering is simply a state of mind.

Nothing has yet happened to us that we could not bear, but we feel sure that sometime something will.

Some people brood over the world's suffering until that brooding makes them themselves weak and miserable; thus do these miserable brooders, of all people, do least to make the world better; they get a certain satisfaction from brooding and find fault with God and things in general.

Those who do most to improve the lot of mankind almost invariably are the ones who have the finest faith in God and the deepest confidence in their fellow men.

¶ Many of the human race do suffer beyond all that is reasonable and right from misfortunes for which somebody is to blame.

We should find out who it is, or what it is, that causes this unnecessary suffering and then devise a cure for it that will work.

God is vastly more displeased with much of that kind of suffering than are we.

But until we repent or mend our ignorance, as the case may be, or unless God exterminates many of us, the suffering due to injustice and oppression must go on.

Partly through ignorance, but much more through greed and self-aggrandizement, men have helped to make life harder than was necessary for their fellows.

I do not mean to imply that all are equally guilty, the difference in guilt is tremendous; yet all of us may be more guilty than we suspect.

Relatively good people often take a very shortsighted view of life and the common good and, therefore, of their duty in this matter.

It is surprising, also, to find how many cynical hearts are hidden behind smiling faces.

Any cynicism is an outward sign of the presence within of an overload of the virus of selfishness.

We would all do well to examine our own hearts and our methods of living and doing business before we become bitter toward God for the life that He leads men.

¶ Just now, the sad plight of the world seems to afford more ample ground than usual for sorrow and complaint; but by our complaining attitude toward God, as if He were to blame, we shall not succeed in shifting the responsibility from where it belongs.

It is because our eyes are closed, our ears are stopped, and our hearts are cold that we fail to set about the removal of the chief sorrows of the world.

When they are not engaged in funmaking, in mischief, or in seeking selfish ends, many people become like little children crying in the dark.

They complain because they think their returns in pleasure are not commensurate with their deserts; they are discouraged because some prize just slipped through their fingers; they are confused, battered, and defeated

at the beginning of the game because they have never grasped the true meaning of life.

As soon as they begin to reap the fruits of their wrong sowing, life, they tell themselves, is getting hard, and then bitterness enters their hearts.

They suppose that they are becoming disillusioned and proving that life is a failure.

When the world gets in a tangle, when hope fades, and unfulfilled desires increase, then something *is* wrong; very much wrong—within.

Just now, the *world* that is *within men* stands desperately in need of instruction; it needs a new mind, a new heart, a new goal.

And unless the inner world hastens to get them, the world without will for a long time be a world of gloom.

Absorption in our accumulated knowledge, new and vast in so many fields, blinds us to the fact that we are not wise concerning life itself.

Unless we speedily give more attention and deeper study to life, we shall get lost and starve in the labyrinth of mechanical knowledge.

A considerable portion of society is lost already; it is running to and fro without getting anywhere other than deeper into the jungle from which it is vainly trying to escape.

All that our splendid new knowledge, and our effort to apply it, is doing for many of us is causing us to neglect utterly the determination of the real mission life is for,

and without that we shall move straight forward to sorrow and defeat.

¶ Life, right life, is the simplifier and unifier of all things.

Without the kind of life that Jesus came to give in abundance, we can not safely go on growing larger and more complex individually and socially.

There is too much downright indifference among us as to what life means; as to which goal is the right one, or whether there is need of any goal at all beyond immediate personal advantage.

¶ Is it real living to live simply to be comfortable and satisfied?

Or are we to live for something more remote, perhaps, but more gloriously worth striving for?

Who knows? Who can tell us?

¶ I believe that Jesus lived and died for the true goal of life.

Sometimes we who profess to follow Him have caught glimpses of it, but we have usually made it, even so, too small for the world in which we live and for a future toward which we move.

All things are ours by divine right, and we are more than welcome to them; we can have them for the taking if we take them for a right purpose and with a right motive.

¶ Every generation should go to school with Jesus and study its new problems with Him.

But instead, many prefer the too exclusive company

of people like themselves; companions who share with them the same wrong mind and allegiance to the same false goal.

All hands who belong to such a company soon convince themselves that they are the only wise people; that others are innocents, or unfortunates, or knaves.

They tell one another that all life is a gamble, but that it is the part of wisdom to learn the rules by which the winners play the game and try for the stakes.

This is one of the prolific causes of suffering on earth.

A nation of gamblers, each regarding human lives as dice, naturally carries its gambling methods into international relations, and in the end the whole race is sucked into the maelstrom.

¶ Many of us are neither fit nor safe for a better world than this; we do too much injury here.

Our Father is too wise to put us where we might tear down and utterly ruin the work of saints and sages that required millions of years to accomplish.

When we consider the present social, economic, political, and international world discord, no wonder we think our lot is hard; and no less wonder God thinks us unsafe for heaven until we have acquired a little more wisdom and character through painful experiences.

Unless we mend our ways a good deal, our next lot is not likely to be any better than this, and may be much worse; for I dare say that God has a suitable proving ground for each one of us until our promotion would be safe.

¶ All this, however, is only one side of the picture; There are millions on earth who are glad to cast in their lot with struggling, suffering humanity.

They know that this is the place where they should be for the present.

Their eyes are open, their ears are unstopped, their hearts are illuminated with the warm love of God.

Those who constitute this great company know and love one another, they love all mankind; even their enemies.

They meet often and speak one to another, they gather about their Master, they study His teachings, they imitate His life, they assimilate His love, they visualize His kingdom, they feed the hungry, they comfort the sorrowful, and for the prize that is set before them, they despise their own suffering and the shame of the cross which a blind and wicked element in the world compels them to bear.

In short, the one thing they do not do, is to complain of their lot on earth; but gladly accept as that lot a commission to help lift mankind to those levels where reigneth love and righteousness.

CHAPTER VII

DOES GOD CAUSE EARTHQUAKES AND CYCLONES?

Why does God cause violent disturbances in nature?

Why does He send pestilences?

Why did God make nature "Red in tooth and claw"?

Why does God permit the innocent and helpless to suffer?

Is it right that children should suffer for the sins of their parents?

If God sees all human suffering, how can He be happy?

Why does God permit the bad to prosper and the good to fail?

¶ Unless we hold God responsible for everything in the realm of nature, it is difficult to see how He can be credited with being the cause of anything therein.

Whether nature is the continuous movement of God's energy, as I believe, or something which He endowed with power to run of itself, makes no difference here.

In either case, earthquakes, cyclones, and other catas-

trophes would be included in, and their happening accord with, His plan.

It is conceivable, and the supposition is no trouble at all to our minds, that all necessary changes could be made to take place gradually; that God could keep the jerks and jolts out of nature if He so elected.

Either He can not prevent these startling and destructive occurrences, or else He does not condemn them nor wish to prevent them.

Accordingly, as Christians, we are compelled to justify God by reason or by faith for everything that happens in nature; and this has to be done by us quite regardless of whether we are old-fashioned or new-fashioned in our theology.

¶ Christians admit neither weakness nor evil to enter into their thought of God.

No one has the presumption to assume that he is wise enough to justify the ways of God in His creation entirely by reason alone; faith has as large and as legitimate a place in the domain of religion as it has in science.

Whatever be the field of investigation, faith leads to knowledge, and added knowledge opens the way to more faith.

If there were no knowledge, there would be no faith, and vice versa.

As things are, reason, and reasonable faith together, can go a long ways toward justifying God in a world like ours.

And it is not only permissible, but it is a duty to line

up all the satisfying reasons we can in explanation of the hard experiences of life.

1. Why Does God Cause Violent Disturbances In Nature?

¶ Flowers bloom and earthquakes shake whether man is present or absent.

It is not necessary to suppose, therefore, that the cyclone was designed of God as a weapon that might be hurled at some one with whom He is displeased; nor earthquakes to shake his house down over his head.

Whether or not these violent physical changes could be dispensed with in the further evolution of the earth, we know at least that in past ages such violent changes have not been a dead loss, for they have wrought most wonderful and beneficent results.

The shallow water with which they have covered continents has fostered life in great abundance and many varieties.

By lifting submerged continents above sea level, they have forced aquatic animals to make the change and become land animals.

By uprearing mountains on the plains, they have set the rivers of water and the rivers of life flowing in new directions to the great advantage of man.

They have created beautiful scenery; they have left rich deposits of ores and precious metals within mining distance of the surface; they have enriched the earth with layers of sediment and drift fit for the plow; they have

exposed to human gaze the records of life from its simplest beginnings.

¶ Volumes might be written on the beneficent results of violent physical changes.

Enough is known concerning the great cataclysms of earth to enable us to see how they have been a powerful factor in world-building.

What they have wrought was absolutely necessary work that had to be done, whether or not it could have been accomplished in some other way.

The only moral question is, could these beneficent changes have been made without the attending loss of life and discomfort to man and beast, or are there ways in which these features were turned to good account also?

For God has purposes beyond mere world-building: world-making is only incidental to soul making; and it may take rougher measures to make a soul fit to live in social relations than we have realized.

¶ A right kind of world for the making of souls must be both gentle and terrible.

The wisdom of God's methods of world-building must be judged, finally, by the total of their effects in the spiritual realm.

It must not be forgotten that nature in all its moods and tenses grateful to us is less than a full expression of God.

A terrific display of force now and then is as necessary

to a full revelation of God as it is necessary to make needed changes in the earth.

Because man can use and deny himself the use of explosives, even he develops greater moral strength than he would if limited to dominion over the quiet, steady energies alone.

Our Father is as gentle as a sunbeam and as terrible as an earthquake, and it is very important that we should know that He is both.

¶ Yet God is by no means a vindictive Being who sits on the rim of the universe and hurls destructive forces at His offending children.

He lets the rain and the thunderbolt fall on the just and the unjust alike if they are in the path of the storm; and if no one was there, He would send the storm and the thunderbolt on their errands just the same.

He is not making war, He is making a universe, and a family worthy to possess it and safe to use it.

Violent movements occur when the conditions are ripe for them; just as a building falls with a crash when the center of gravity is no longer supported.

No new forces are employed; the fall only reveals the energy that was impounded in the building all the time; energy that became a rushing outward current when the stabilizing energy of the foundation was removed.

Terrific storms occur and perform useful functions on the sun where no life exists, that would wreck the human race were earth the scene of their like.

¶ As for myself, I should not wish to live in a universe where the awe-inspiring was entirely eliminated; for even in this world where terrifying events every now and again come to pass, they stop this side of coercion and the souls of men are never driven into making God their refuge.

From infancy, our eyes dilated and our hearts expanded not at the sight but at the news of dreadful happenings.

Our highest good made the knowledge of such terrific forces absolutely necessary lest we forget that we are to be held to stern and serious account for the lives we lead.

These thrilling stories left a spiritual deposit of wholesome awe and reverence in our hearts more precious than the gold that has been deposited in the crevices of mountain rock by the terrific upheavals of the earth.

These stories furnished and set up trains of thought, bracing to the sense of dependence upon God, that became the warp and woof of the souls we were weaving.

¶ And it is well for us to remember that a very small percentage of the human family has perished in the awful catastrophes of earth.

Besides, it is not at all certain, since all must die sooner or later, that accidental death involves greater suffering than natural death.

Over the entire earth, thousands die every day in the year without making much impression on our minds; but when the Titanic went down with several hundred aboard,

we were dazed; we felt it almost as overpoweringly as if each died a thousand times.

Yet each one died but once and, for many of them, their death was less prolonged misery than it would have been if they had died one now and another then on shore.

The passengers on the Titanic were but a handful in comparison with all the other people who died on that day—yet who of us gave those others a thought?

I should choose a world like ours in preference to a tame, dangerless world, even if I knew that sometime I should be struck down by lightning or swept away by a cyclone.

A world like ours makes for life and love of higher quality far more than it would if it were as safe and stupid as an ox-cart.

If all opportunity for the dramatic were taken from life, from whence would come our music, our art, our biography, our history? I prefer a world where—

> God moves in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants His footsteps in the sea
> And rides upon the storm.

¶ Those who reside about Vesuvius probably love their live mountain far more than our people love our quiet, harmless ones; and the number of them who have died from the eruptions of Vesuvius are as nothing compared with its admirers who have died a natural death.

People who do so, live by their own choice within the danger zone of a volcano.

The thoughts and imaginations of people all over the earth have been quickened by Vesuvius, our fascinating and awe-inspiring old friend.

Every child has his attention riveted to his little geography as he looks at the pictures of volcanoes and the frightful sand storms of deserts.

One of the deepest responses of the human heart is to the appeal of the dramatic and terrible; it takes us out of ourselves and touches us with the awe of the Infinite; of that which exceeds and lies beyond all human power.

¶ Moreover, if we use our intelligence, the world, which does not have our soul in its power at all, is far more safe than dangerous for our bodies.

And one great good service rendered by all destructive forces is to make us use our intelligence.

We could and should make the world a much safer place than it is in which to live, although we shall never be able to eliminate all danger.

If I were asked to suggest a better world than the one about us for beginners and experimenters, I should not know what suggestions to make.

It is not a nobler God and a better universe that we need, but a deeper knowledge of our own good and a finer fidelity to God and ourselves.

In every way this side of downright coercion, God stimulates and encourages us to grow in wisdom and char-

acter, by taking a larger share in turning the raw material supplied by this universe into a lovely dwelling.

This constant extension of the scope of our participation is only made possible by the invention of tools and of the harnessing of the forces able to supplement the work of arms and legs and backs.

2. Why Does God Send Pestilences?

¶ There is no realm, however good, in which the risk of evil may not come.

Jesus said that it is unwise to fear them that can kill the body only.

To many people the word microbe has a frightful sound; and yet bacteria are as necessary to man, to beast, to vegetation, and to the soil as are fire and water.

But fire and water, indispensable blessings that they are, are most destructive elements when not under proper control.

Water may either slake our thirst or drown us; gas may asphyxiate us or cook our food; bacteria may destroy us or help on the most useful chemical activities in our bodies.

The greater part of the many species of bacteria are not only harmless but highly useful.

The malignant germs, comparatively few, such as typhoid, may have offices in nature that we have not yet discovered, but we already know that the malignant germs have served at least two wonderfully important purposes: They have required us to keep clean, and have

driven us like a whip to make the acquaintance of the whole microscopic world below our natural range of vision.

¶ It is impossible to estimate how much of our scientific advancement has been thus due to these enemies.

Sickness, like fires, is for the most part incidental and preventable.

Sickness usually is a good friend who tells us that we stand in need of repairs and insists upon our attending to them.

After sin, ignorance is our greatest enemy.

Forming the acquaintance of the two worlds bewildering for their vastness, the one beneath our ordinary range of vision and the other above it, affords us something more than interesting intellectual exercise.

Our physical and spiritual well-being forbids our remaining ignorant of these worlds.

Man was placed here not to mark time, but for a life of progress.

God wishes to have us sweep His vast Heavens with the telescope and develop the sciences that will enable us to understand them.

He bids us by a thousand and one appeals to our curiosity, to turn our microscope upon the worlds beneath us and become familiar in our ingenious laboratories with His worlds in miniature.

He invites us to take an ever enlarging part in the bringing of all things into harmony with human need and divine wisdom.

God wishes us to know the house in which we live from attic to cellar, so that we may keep it in better order.

¶ The spiritual graces and virtues are supremely good, but how can we cultivate them while we willfully remain ignorant of our bodies or of the world in which we live?

To remain ignorant of these things is to invite disaster and death.

It would be a sorry day for man's spiritual as well as his physiological health if scientific knowledge were not further sought after.

Psychic energy has its laws which are as real and available as those of chemical or electric energy and they also stand in need of more ferreting out for us.

God could do us no worse turn than to carry us as ignorant little lambs over all places of danger.

We were not designed to remain such ignorant little things; we were ordained to become, by growth, intelligent sons of God; we were expected to learn the way we should take, and by our intelligence and character, walk in it with safety.

If God met all our difficulties for us, we should live on forever in almost total ignorance.

For ages, men did live here in well nigh complete ignorance of the laws of chemistry, nor did they know of the existence of the infinite worlds beneath us and above us.

¶ Apparently that would be our own condition, nor should we ever become acquainted with them if occa-

sional disasters had not swept down from above or swept up from beneath to arouse men from their lethargy.

For millenniums these disasters awakened only superstitious fear; for men did not dream that they were invitations to them to come out of their shell.

It is but recently that we have learned that every catastrophe is a blow to our sluggish nature for the purpose of waking us to new effort in the direction of self-discovery and world conquest.

If, semi-occasionally, we were not thus rudely awakened, more than likely we should become degraded parasites.

As it is, some sluggards growl and curse when they are disturbed; but if the hand that arouses us were not a bit rough we would sleep on.

Rough as the awakening is, multitudes still continue to slumber; but God will not permit us to oversleep, for lack of alarms, while the house burns down over our head or while we sink into stagnation.

3. Why Did God Make Nature "Red in Tooth and Claw"?

¶ Some of the people who feel so distressed over the fact that animals prey upon one another have no compunction of conscience over raising animals for their own food.

Man himself is a carnivorous being and is not greatly disturbed by the fact.

Most of our domesticated animals would never have been born at all if they did not serve a human need.

Because they are valuable for food, they are bred in great numbers and well cared for. Intelligent and humane treatment is the only profitable treatment.

Animals do not suffer from meditation of death and a judgment to come; they do not worry about their *future* nor the future of their posterity.

If they are humanely slaughtered, which sad to say is not always true, unconsciousness comes before they are aware of being hurt.

If existence is worth anything to them, it is well for them that they are bred in great numbers and, after being well cared for during life, are caused to pass away before old age and infirmities come upon them.

Remember that they could not live here indefinitely and multiply; a single species alone, in that case, would soon crowd everything else off the earth.

If animals are to be born at all, they must soon go the way of all flesh and die.

I once met a person whose feelings were greatly outraged because God permitted little lambs to be eaten by fierce lions.

Evidently this man had never pictured to himself what a hell of suffering a world of old, decrepit animals would be like.

I confess that I do not like to kill even a caterpillar because I will credit it at the moment of its doom with all the thoughts and feelings that would be mine.

¶ No one should wantonly take life; yet when the taking of life becomes necessary, the death stroke and unconsciousness usually take place almost simultaneously.

The reflex action of muscles that immediately follows looks very distressing to us; but the animal is quite past feeling before that spasm of the muscles takes place.

Although the very phrase, "red in tooth and claw" gives us a shiver because we naturally feel faint at the sight of blood, yet in "nature's slaughterhouse" when blood appears, the possibility of pain is usually past.

¶ True, every living thing feeds on something else; even bacteria will feed upon bacteria as well as on higher animals and plants.

It is interesting to observe under the glass one microscopic being wrap itself around and absorb another with good or bad effects upon the consumer.

True, all animals are conscious, yet that is something very different from being self-conscious.

By following their natural bent, they accomplish their work in the economy of nature and then becoming food for other workers are sent back to their primitive elements.

By far the greater part of this destruction of life, I am convinced, means little more, as far as pain is concerned, than the snuffing out of a candle.

Just a touch, and the insect is gone; a snap of the steel jaws, and the victim is unconscious.

¶ For all animals, according to their upward place in the scale of life, increased and more acute pain and pleasure

become necessary; pleasure to allure, and pain to safeguard.

Fear of the cause, is the response that naturally follows pain and teaches the animal to avoid danger. Something resembling fear begins with the lower forms of life and becomes more accented as life moves upward.

Both the pleasure and the fear, accompaniments of life in the jungle, must be very great; but they are largely spontaneous.

It is not very likely that animals brood over the one or the other but pursue or escape, as the case may be, under the urge of the moment.

Fear puts verve into the animal and accelerates its efforts to fight or to flee.

This not only develops these capacities, but such record-breaking performances greatly add to its pleasure; even nice little boys like to fight.

Our police dog is affectionate but whenever an opportunity offers to fight another dog, his very hair gets electrified.

¶ The cat's disposition to toy with a mouse has every appearance of wanton cruelty, but it is a pretty well established fact that the mouse is half hypnotized all the time by some beneficent provision in nature.

Livingstone tells us that when he was knocked down by a lion in the jungles of Africa, the deep peace that immediately followed was like an opiate.

Nature seems to set certain automatic limits to the anguish producible by pain.

¶ Nothing that has here been said is intended to deny the fact that animals suffer, or to smooth over the cruel treatment of animals by human beings which is beyond belief.

The humane societies have a noble work to perform in protecting animals from human beasts.

Men have much to answer for in their cruel treatment, and in their toleration of the cruel treatment, of animals.

¶ As for people who brood over what they call "nature's slaughterhouse" they go too far when they endow insects and worms with the equivalent of human capacity for pain and anxiety; with such pain and anxiety as they themselves would feel if they and their families were being slaughtered by a band of Indians.

Ninety-nine per cent of the total life on this earth is snuffed out with no more consciousness of death than there was consciousness of birth.

4. Why Does God Permit the Innocent and Helpless to Suffer?

¶ Partly—indeed, to no small degree—because many of us men and women can not be prevailed upon to stop doing the things that cause the innocent and helpless to suffer.

The first step necessary to eliminate such suffering would be to exterminate many of us.

God may do everything possible to persuade, but He is self-debarred from crossing the line and doing anything to coerce.

Human beings, for good or ill, are necessarily members one of another.

God seems to be saying to us, in permitting it, that the suffering of the innocent and the helpless is not too high a price to pay for the avoidance of permanent divisions and splits in His human family.

If some do wrong, in the nature of things all must suffer together; and, naturally, the weak suffer most.

Except through the instrumentality of the strong, what means has God left of protecting the weak?

If, as so often happens, the only living instruments through whom He can work fail Him, what can God do but ply the slow pupils with new persuasion to a change of heart?

¶ Our unnecessary ignorance, indifference, bad government, crooked business, and moral laxness are the most prolific causes of human suffering; and these are to be charged against us and not against God.

If people in general were as anxious to stop the pain and sorrow of the innocent and helpless by stopping its wicked sources as God is, the major part of human suffering would cease at once.

Jesus said, "Let him that is greatest among you be the servant of all."

But we too frequently say, "Let him that is greatest among you prove it by showing how many of his fellows he can grind under his heel."

¶ The famine-smitten districts, the plague-cursed regions, the odoriferous dens, the haunts of criminals, all

these could rather soon be wiped out, to a very large extent, if society only cared enough about its weaker members to set up and operate the social machinery required.

Strange to say, many members of God's human family deliberately and maliciously cause others to suffer; this is true of thieves, murderers, and crooks of every description.

And besides, many who are not intentionally vicious do careless and selfish things that in the long run weaken society and cause universal suffering.

We may pray to God forever on behalf of the innocent, and much of their suffering would not be diminished if men kept on doing those things that cause the suffering.

Our heart-aches over innocent sufferers amount to nothing unless they arouse us to Herculean self-sacrificing efforts to insure every human being as far as possible, his right to be well, prosperous, and happy.

¶ If the cruel burden of human suffering is ever to be reduced and finally eliminated, we must coöperate with God in putting down the vices; both the ignorant and the intentional vices, that eat like a cancer at the heart of society.

Heartless men must not be permitted to enrich themselves through child labor; property owners must not be allowed to fatten themselves by renting run-down property that breeds disease; nations must rise above the crime of war that kills off the best men and starves the women and the children; greed, domestic and inter-

national, must be greatly reduced before we can hope to curtail the suffering of the helpless and innocent.

As society grows more complex, suffering will greatly increase unless we grow much better, because both the individual man's power to augment and to assuage it will be multiplied manyfold.

An inordinate desire for pleasure will incapacitate us for taking any serious interest in the well-being of God's human family and make real happiness impossible.

¶ If the unnecessary suffering in the world does not soon sit heavier than it does at present on the hearts of people, civilization will again fall into moral decay.

Too many folks think that common decency is enough; and then complacently do things that they could not do at all, let alone with impunity, if they were more enlightened in regard to their human family duties.

If any one is greatly distressed (as he should be) over the suffering of the innocent and helpless, then let him join the great army of men and women who are determined to turn the searchlight of truth upon everything that is related to human weal and woe.

We are beginning to learn many things of which our ancestors were ignorant, that lie at the foundation of all social well-being and we are capable of learning much more.

The suffering of the world *is* pitiful; not pitiful enough it seems, however, to stir us as a people to make its prevention our chief business.

Ninety per cent of human suffering could and should

be made to cease; but it could not be done by changing God's beneficent law of cause and effect.

If God were to save the innocent from suffering while we were sinning against them, He would need to remove them completely from us, and we would degenerate with all the ease that an unsupported object falls to the ground.

Even the bitter consequences of our wrong social doing have not, so far, deterred us from violating the laws of God and humanity, and if all evil consequences of our wrongdoing were removed, the last hope for the race would be gone.

¶ We need to be impressed more than ever with the sinfulness of all curable ignorance; ignorance of any and all particulars that pertain to the happiness and well-being of the race.

Every useful bit of knowledge has a moral and also a religious significance.

No matter how much we pray to God and ask Him to forgive all our sins, we are sinful if we carelessly refuse to learn from new facts of life other sins of ignorance that we are committing without even a thought that they should be disowned.

It is no pleasure to God to be told how much we adore and love Him if we care nothing for studying out what He is doing or how He is trying to do it; if we care nothing for the permanent relief of our unfortunate and weaker brothers.

The study of the sciences, and the conscientious appli-

cation of their laws to the needs of humanity, has become our bounden Christian duty.

To leave it to God to look after human suffering, so that we shall need to know and do nothing with reference to it, would make us over into a despicable race, worse than useless to ourselves, to the innocent, and to God.

With sorrow and shame we must admit that as a rule, we have not done the part that might reasonably have been expected of us in helping to remove the sorrows of the world.

Of course, a few people have, but a few good people can not do everything; society as a whole must be aroused to better understanding of its social duties; to a diviner way of living.

And that would be a genuine revival of religion that is much needed.

¶ The suffering of the race is not confined to the misfortunes of children, the sick, and the poor, although that suffering is widespread and appalling.

When the mental suffering of the world is added to the physical suffering, the aggregate beggars description.

Some people little realize the ocean of anguish in the world on account of moral failure, family troubles, and all sorts of mishaps among people who seem favorably situated.

The world's burden is heavy, and must remain heavy, until the mind of the world is lifted to the mind of Christ and it learns to look at it through His eyes.

If the world is wise, it will heed these gracious words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

¶ Not for a moment do I claim that there would be no suffering left if all people were good.

However, if we all came to the Master and, like Him, "grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man," the reduction of suffering that would follow would be astounding in its proportions.

And yet, some suffering would remain; there would still be some accidents, some sickness, some failures, some weariness, and the separation from loved ones by death.

Room must be found in the making of a life for a reasonable measure of hardship; up to the extent that hardship is a blessing.

Since Jesus was "made perfect through suffering," it is useless for us to hope that we can be made perfect without our allotment of suffering.

The degree in which suffering has been one of the factors in the making of all great souls, is but common knowledge.

Therefore, we should bear up without loss of courage under all burdens that are unavoidable or self-sacrificingly necessary.

Sorrow has done too much for us, for many of us to feel that all suffering should be eliminated.

For the seasoning of our souls, we must endure hardships as good soldiers; and when we do so faithfully

and bravely, strength comes and it is not so hard any longer.

For God shares our sorrows, and in doing so fills us with His life, His love, and His vision.

All who suffer for the love of God and men, live in a fellowship divine.

The unnecessary trouble that we make ourselves and others, is hideous; otherwise, the necessary hardships of life would be more easily seen to be a wholesome tonic. ¶ The path of life that we are to travel is not completely charted and marked with guide-posts before we travel it; if it were, the never-dying interest that we take in life would be gone.

Fortunately, room is left for the exercise of judgment and for a measure of what we call the incalculable.

The best plans in the world sometimes fail; wind and tide are not always favorable.

The element of incalculableness is too universal for anyone to escape it altogether—even Jesus did not.

There is room for disappointment and failure in the best of lives; a good man has no guarantee that all his experiments will prove successful or that he will live to be three-score and ten.

The best family in the world can not take it for granted that death and other misfortunes will not come to them.

There is no Providence, however much implored, that ever has or ever will completely eliminate unexpected set-backs for any of us.

In the face of all the claims of deliverance that have been made for faith and prayer, some of the greatest saints have been the greatest sufferers.

The great afflictions that fall to the lot of some who excel in purity, faith, and prayer do not in the least discredit either these virtues or their possession of them.

Saints are known to be saints because they perform hard duties and bear severe trials with cheerful patience and love.

Through twenty years of distressing affliction, the one to whom this book is dedicated became day by day more loving and more lovely. She is canonized in the hearts of all who knew her.

5. Is It Right That Children Should Suffer for the Sins of Their Parents?

¶ It is not right; it is the greatest injustice.

Nothing is more cruelly wrong than for parents to injure their children through sin; to doom them, for instance, to blindness and other misfortunes before they are born.

Thousands make themselves through their sins, unfit for parenthood; and they are under moral obligation to deny themselves the great blessing of a family.

They should willingly accept this deprivation as a part of their own just punishment and as a proof of their unwillingness to lay heavy burdens upon the children that might be born to them.

That the *results* of parents' sins are visited upon their children to the third and fourth generation is a correct observation, and the fact should deter men from doing those things that will be certain to bring suffering upon their offspring.

The laws of heredity and environment are the foundation of all human advancement, and they bind parents and children who conform to them together in the most endearing relations.

Men who curse their offspring by giving them a bad inheritance and a pernicious environment, strike at two of God's most beneficent laws. The germs of life from which our children grow are, it is plain, put in our keeping. And as to environment, God has no hands with which to take care of children, except the hands of their parents and neighbors; He has no lips with which to teach them, except the lips of their parents, their teachers, and their friends.

While God carries the greater share of the load in the making and preserving of every life, yet if parent hands and parent brains will not coöperate with him in the share left to them, what can he do but ply them with new persuasions to a change of heart?

If parents do not know enough and care enough to do their part, since God is self-debarred from crossing the line and doing anything to coerce them, their children must suffer.

Can any one imagine, in the common nature of things, how God is able to care for babies, or look after the

poor little waifs in the slums, if parents and older people in general are utterly indifferent to them?

¶ All rational beings get their worth from belonging to one another and from being a part of one another; even if they could *exist* in isolation, they would be of no value to themselves or any one else.

Here then is the bed-rock reason why children suffer for the sins of their parents and neighbors; they are a part of their parents and a part of society; and even this frightful bill of anguish is not too high a price to pay to avoid a split in God's human family beyond all healing.

The injustice done them is often terrible and the guilt should be felt by all those who directly or indirectly cause their injury, or stand by consenting to it.

God is filled with compassion for these helpless sufferers and through his suffering presence in Jesus, He is trying to get us to open wider channels for this same compassion in our hearts.

¶ When parents and society get weighted down by the burdensomeness of these awful and sobering facts, there will be less of "Rachael weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted because they are not."

Because the tie that binds us to one another from conception to birth, and from birth to death, is of the nature of an umbilical cord, we all suffer more or less because of the sins of our parents and neighbors.

But the reverse is likewise true; we all have a cumulative share in the blessings of the good.

It can be made a beautiful thing to live; and those of

us who enjoy a good inheritance, and good environment, should show our gratitude by doing our part to lift the curse that falls like a blight upon so many innocent sufferers.

In this noble work, we shall find God our greatest friend and hardest co-worker.

God calls us, above the ribald shouts of revelry and the wailings of the innocent, to join with Him in a mighty crusade against ignorance and vice.

Therefore, curse not God because the innocent suffer, but turn to and help Him with thy might, O man, Son of the Highest!

6. If God Sees All Human Suffering, How Can He Be Happy?

¶ God is not as happy as he might be; He takes no pleasure in suffering. He who marks the sparrow's fall and hears the raven's cry has no cruelty in His nature.

Doubtless God is happy, but we malign Him by thinking Him capable of nothing but unruffled bliss.

He does not enjoy hearing little children cry for bread; nor is He pleased with those who stole the bread from those starving mouths.

His knowledge that the afflictions of His children are largely caused by willful ignorance and crime does not dissipate his grief.

God is not so happy but that He would be much happier if we all obeyed Him perfectly and were more kind and helpful to one another.

The Great Father did not enjoy the late war; His grief was deep and genuine when He saw His children take the instruments of life and turn them into the instruments of death.

¶ To try to picture the suffering that God sees and feels is a futile task; no one knows the billionth part of all that gives Him sorrow.

Little as we know in the aggregate of this suffering, yet, after thinking long about it, it grows so vast and appalling that we almost forget there is anything left to think about but suffering.

Whether we consider the world's happiness or its misery, we are filled with wonder; there is so much of both.

Jesus, the one most like God, was sorrowful in the Garden even unto death; but for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross and despised the shame. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth.

¶ The point to be emphasized is that our Father knows a far deeper satisfaction than would be possible if He did not care. His tender compassion for the sorrowful is one of His deepest joys.

In suffering with those we love, there is a happiness such as selfish hearts can never know.

This is not foolish vaporing about something we do not understand, for we too have tasted something of its joy.

It is a satisfaction deeper than mere light-hearted happiness.

Who are the most contented, courageous, and sweet-

spirited people in the world? Those who are selfish and indifferent to the world's woe? Or those who identify themselves compassionately and helpfully with the needy and afflicted?

For an answer, consult the rescue workers, the missionaries, and all self-sacrificing people.

Which had the deeper joy, the Pharisee and Levite who passed the man who fell among thieves without pity and help, or the good Samaritan?

When I hear those who count not their own lives dearer unto them, speak of their joy in ministering to a needy world, I try to imagine the exultation of God; the living, dying, joyous, sorrowful God; the God whose sympathies are as high as heaven and as deep as hell.

What must be the richness of His life who knows all goodness, all sin, all happiness, and all sorrow; who never stands idly by but brings to the world's highest aspirations and deepest despair a wisdom, a love, and a compassion that will ultimately burn away all barriers, destroy all opposition, win all hearts, and fulfill His own highest hope in the fulfilled hopes of every heart!

¶ God is not exactly what we ordinarily mean by happy; He knows something so much deeper, richer, and more worth while.

Simple happiness will not express it; before such joy as His, simple happiness pales into something vapid.

Not until we have lived more deeply, and entered more fully into the suffering and joy of our Lord can or shall we understand.

There are no symbols that will exactly convey to us now just what it is that God feels. We shall never know except as we become like Him.

Dying will not teach us, going to a crystal heaven will not inform us; the hallelujah choruses of the redeemed will not convey to us its meaning; its truth will first dawn upon us when we have filled up the measure of Christ's suffering, and come bringing white-robed souls with us out of the wreck and grime of a cruel world.

Then we shall understand how God managed to endure the suffering of a world like ours.

7. Why Does God Permit the Bad to Prosper and the Good to Fail?

¶ While there are bad rich men and good poor men, yet as a rule good people succeed much better than those who are lazy, dishonest and wicked.

But what kind of a world would this be if the wicked could never succeed in accomplishing their purposes?

If only the good could keep well, avoid accidents, and make money, life would lose about all its meaning. Every one would be forced to be good or perish.

If God discriminated between the good and the bad to that extent, then in every railroad wreck, in every disaster, in every epidemic, the good would be spared and the bad taken.

Perpetual miracles would have to be wrought to keep fire from burning the property of good men, to turn the

lightning out of its common course, and to cause cyclones to skip all good people and their property.

Of a more irrational world than that, it would be difficult to conceive.

In such a world, it would be impossible to make character or to do business.

No thoughtful person could wish God to upset the whole economy of His wise and beneficent laws daily and hourly for the sake of making a good man prosper or a bad man fail.

The more one thinks on the question, Why does God permit the bad to prosper and the good to fail, the more irrational does a proposal for its reversal appear.

He would have to checkmate his laws so frequently that it would turn the universe into bedlam.

¶ If a bad man shoots straight he is a law keeper in that respect and he will hit the mark; if he plows well, he will raise corn.

The one who best fulfills the laws of success in a particular line will, as a rule, best succeed.

Some very profane men are honest, skillful, and generous; life presents many curious combinations of goodness and badness, of skill and inefficiency.

Some good people are very indifferent at many other things and will never succeed at them because they lack the required elements of success.

Saving money is an art which some people can never learn; and judicious spending is a problem which some can never solve.

Many people, scattered through all classes, have more or less "bad luck"; they get sick, their gilt-edged securities become worthless, their properties lose their value because of forced liquidation by some sudden turn for the bad in business affairs—a whole string of such setbacks may keep them poor through no fault of their own.

Others may have an almost unbroken chain of good luck. Some Indians have lately become millionaires, without turning a hand over, because oil was discovered on their land.

Sometimes a business turns out much better than the owner ever planned or dreamed; sometimes just the reverse.

After a man has embarked in a certain line of business that promised well, it is not always easy to drop it if his hopes are not realized; and he may have to show the most consummate skill and industry in order to keep it a moderate success or to keep it from failing altogether.

¶ To make success in business absolutely certain, an entirely different world would be required, a world that would be nothing like as good as the present one.

Taking all things as they are, those who are honest and willing can usually earn a living; many can save something, and a few can get rich.

Policy may or may not be the best honesty, but all things considered, honesty is the best policy.

A man is not to be judged by the amount of money he has, and no sane person so judges him.

I know many poor men whom I should rather be like with their poverty than to be like many rich men whom I know with their wealth.

Yet there are rich men who are a great honor and blessing to the race.

Some believe that the wealth of the world should be pretty evenly distributed among us all; that private ownership is wrong.

While it is true that some men have great wealth which has been gained by dishonest methods and that they should be brought to a rigorous accounting, yet I am convinced that the wealth of the world would be squandered in a thousand foolish and harmful ways if it were placed in the hands of all the people regardless of their intelligence and character.

Great accumulations of wealth can be used to provide business with adequate capital and for the advancement of science.

At the present stage of civilization, perhaps the best thing we can do is to guarantee the rights of private ownership while we place added restrictions upon those who are inclined to gain wealth by unfair means.

No matter what system of economics we may adopt, much crookedness will go on unless we pay more attention to our duties as Christian citizens.

¶ The duties of citizenship are probably more systematically neglected by good people than any other set of their duties.

Here again men have to be driven to their duty through

civic, social, and industrial suffering before they will perform it; and yet there is nothing that develops and improves social consciousness and good-will like an intelligent interest in the common political, economic, and social good.

¶ Some people make money because they give themselves completely, soul and body, to the making of it; ignorant they are and they are willing to remain ignorant of pretty much everything else but money-making; they deny themselves all pleasure except that which they find in the accumulation of wealth; they turn a deaf ear to all forms of charity; they withhold many things from them that would be beneficial to their families.

The number of people who get rich in this way is probably far greater than many of us realize.

And it can be done, as it often is, without being crooked in business; but it is too big a price for a sensible man to pay.

Many of our best people deliberately choose not to enter the race for great riches because their fine sense of values makes them feel that they can not afford to do so.

If to get rich they must be virtually dishonest like some, or become a high tension business *machine* like others, they quite prefer to remain poor.

But where a person can gain wealth without being dishonest or without sacrificing all his other interests in life, as sometimes he may, then it becomes a Christian duty; for if he did not accept this greater opportunity to

serve, he would make himself unworthy in the sight of God and man.

Where one can reasonably and honestly render this larger service, let him rejoice in it; but if he cannot gain riches without sidetracking his other obligations to God and man, let him remain poor without feeling ashamed of his poverty.

Every man has his reward: A worthy poor man gains from his life investment a competency, a soul, Divine approval, and the love of many; an unworthy rich man wins from his life investment the envy and hatred of many and the loss of his soul.

I have known men who nobly and conscientiously made their personal sacrifice by giving up many things for the greater service they could render to society by managing "big" business.

¶ There is nothing mysterious about why some succeed and some fail when we consider the uncertainty of riches, differences in ability, and in opportunities that inevitably come in the nature of things.

A world with no business risk in it would not be a good world in which to train us for a better one.

A man should not have his property taken from him, as long as he does business honestly, because he does not believe in my religion, nor because of some moral imperfection that he may have.

And when a man is not honest in business, God is simply waiting for us to help Him to bring that man to judgment.

However, if all men were honest, business would still be something like the weather; wet seasons and dry; seasons cold and seasons scorching hot.

It requires great foresight and many readjustments to keep business up with the times; a railroad misses a town, a new substitute is found for some old commodity, a new invention junks a whole mill-full of costly machinery, a whole industry shifts from one section to another—a thousand natural things may happen to make business prosper in one section and deteriorate or fail in another.

The readjustments necessitated by these changes, in the long run, are great factors in the advancement of the race; they prevent stagnation and dry rot; they keep men alert and progressive.

No one need ever expect or hope for a time when prosperity shall be made too easy or too safe; God thinks too much of us to permit such a thing.

CHAPTER VIII

WHERE DID SIN COME FROM?

Could sin have entered God's good world without the seductive influence of a devil?

Is there a personal devil?

What is sin?

Who is to blame for sin?

Why do we sin?

Will God damn a sinner?

Is there any value in sin?

¶ Many people regard sin as the most perplexing mystery in the world.

Where did sin come from? Why does God permit it? Why did He make us with sinful natures? Why does He allow the devil to tempt us?

Something of an injured feeling in these questions seems to imply that God has not been quite fair with His children.

¶ False teaching is much to blame for the mist that has gathered about this subject.

It has made the nature and origin of sin appear much more mysterious than was necessary.

Though the nature and cause of sin were ever so sim-

ple, yet the ravages of sin would be enough to daze anyone familiar with them.

The best and most sheltered people sometimes tremble before the waves of vice that sweep over the country; and those who are not protected stagger under the burden of sin.

Homes, schools, business institutions, and governments have all felt its withering touch.

Whoever regards sin lightly is either a knave or a fool.

¶ A few years ago some psychologists began teaching that it was natural to do right and unnatural to do wrong; that sin was rather incidental and might be avoided by the application of a few simple rules of psychology.

To weary teachers, to perplexed parents, and to some who were even more weary and perplexed by their own sins, this sounded like good news.

However, in spite of all our psychology sin has kept right on at about the same old pace.

School children are not yet saints, business is not morally perfect, politics is not "chemically pure" and when the world war broke out many were inclined to believe it showed that the world was more wicked than it had been for a century.

Psychology is very good in its place, but it is not a panacea, it does not know everything, nor can it supply the motive power necessary to transform the race.

Human nature is strongly inclined to be good and it is greatly tempted to be bad.

Even the teachers of the most hopeful, promising forms of applied psychology are not entirely free from sin themselves, nor are they altogether unfamiliar with the stress and strain of life.

Every one of them has at times a little more than he can do to keep in the straight and narrow path and if he were differently employed he might encounter worse temptations than any he has yet known.

Right knowledge is a great help, but character in the long run depends upon a choice, an alliance, and a fight.

Others may greatly aid us, but we ourselves must supply the real thing that brings the moral victory.

¶ After one has deliberately chosen his ideal goal, after he has carefully formed his holy alliances, especially with God, and after he has begun to fight the good fight, he will still experience some painful lapses.

He will need, from time to time, to repent and try again with renewed determination or he will fail.

To teach that we can be good without sometimes having to strive to our utmost, is both untruthful and dangerous.

¶ So it is that while some make goodness altogether harder than is necessary, others minimize the struggle which every good person knows is involved in the winning of a character.

Even so pure and loving a person as Jesus, with all the helps at His command, sometimes groaned under the strain of temptation.

No one ever knew better than He how to make goodness easy and unirksome and delightful; yet He knew

its hard side as well, and gave His disciples fair warning to beware of temptations from without and from within.

In the face of all our patent methods for eliminating sin, this generation has inherited the race-long conflict with evil.

Advanced civilization brings to the young and undisciplined rare opportunities to be good, and subtle temptations to be bad.

Even if our earth were as civilized as heaven, youth would still need to learn how to live through trials and temptations.

¶ If we are to get anywhere with the subject of sin and temptation, we must lift it entirely out of its old setting.

A better understanding of sin and a finer determination to grapple with it, are matters of primary importance to every human being.

No one can honestly stand apart and say with indifference, "Sin has touched neither me nor any of my loved ones; why should I be anxious?"

1. Could Sin Have Entered God's Good World Without the Seductive Influence of a Devil?

¶ Yes, because some innocent child of God had to sin before there was a devil.

The first satan in this universe came to be because of sin, and not the first sin because of satan.

God never made a sinner; all sinners when they began life were innocent.

As soon, however, as a person becomes wicked he helps to lead his associates into sin.

As we have said, some one had to sin before there was a devil; and if one did, all may.

¶ Many people believe in two Gods; a good God, and a devil-god, who is just a little less powerful, but not less omnipresent.

We have usually supposed that the satan so much feared and preached about, sinned while living in heaven.

If that were true and sin could be committed in heaven, then surely man, without any outside satanic power to influence him, might sin on earth.

Belief in a devil explains nothing with regard to the origin of sin in the universe.

Even if it were admitted that sin was brought to the earth by an Evil Spirit, the origin of the evil in the Evil Spirit would not be explained.

2. Is There a Personal Devil?

¶ There is not simply one, there are many; and all of us have seen some of them and felt their seductive influence.

The devils we know, however, were all born on earth.

There are many kinds of devils: little devils and big devils, cunning devils and fool devils; there are devils aplenty.

In just so far as he turns away from his Father, every child of God becomes a devil; he becomes a personal

center of evil; he becomes a tempter of others; and he may grow, as many have, to be mighty in evil.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the seductive influence of sinful men and women; the evil influence which they personally exert and the greater influence for evil of the tempting situations which they create.

No being lower than a child of God is capable of becoming a devil; animals may be fierce, but they can not become evil spirits.

They are just clean wild animals until they are domesticated; and then they may be made filthy, but never devils.

¶ If God has children elsewhere than on this earth, they too have likely sinned; by this time some of them perhaps have become greater sinners than any we have ever known on earth.

The most wicked person in the universe, if there is such, is the biggest devil; and all other sinners, regardless of where they live, are evil spirits in exact proportion to their wickedness.

¶ Is it probable that wicked spirits from other worlds ever came to tempt people on earth? It is not at all likely.

This much I can say, I have never blamed the theological Satan for any wrong thing that ever I did; there were always plenty of reasons well known to me for doing wrong without blaming him.

An Irishman once told the sheriff that he had twenty-one reasons for knowing that a certain crime was not committed by the man whom he was seeking. The first

reason was that the man had died before the crime was committed.

"Hold on," said the sheriff, "If that is true you need not give me your other twenty reasons."

So why should we hunt up other causes that are more than doubtful when we know well enough why we sin? ¶ An old man once testified in prayer meeting that he had had an unusually hard fight that night with the devil who tried to keep him from the service.

He thanked God, however, that he had been able to win the victory over Satan and come to the service where he had experienced an unusual blessing.

The facts were these: having done a hard day's work in the cold he was tired and hungry—both of which were good. His excellent wife had provided a good supper, of which he partook gratefully and heartily. Filled and satisfied, he sat down by the warm fire and soon became delightfully drowsy.

Everything so far was a reason for gratitude to God. Many a man whose nerves stick through the skin wishes that he could enjoy the blessings of such restful, contented drowsiness as this old man felt.

When the hour for prayer meeting came, there was naturally a conflict between his sense of duty and his blissful enjoyment of ease.

If he had decided to do his duty promptly, the struggle would have been over in a moment; but stopping to weigh his duty against his immediate comfort the battle soon became fierce.

Having at last made the better choice he was now reaping his reward. The good demon of drowsiness was gone and his soul was filled with spiritual delights.

On returning home, the good demon of drowsiness would again take possession of him and cause him to sink to rest with a soul cleansed and refreshed.

Now it is better to know a little psychology in a case like that, than to be tormented by the thought of devils; unless one should foolishly conclude that temporizings and parleys with his natural temptations are less dangerous.

¶ Of one thing I am very certain; there is no wicked spirit who is as much everywhere present as God; there is no wicked spirit who can be with all the people all the time in all places watching his chance to lead them into sin.

Any idea of Satan that makes him practically a bad God, is a fiction of the imagination.

We need not fear a God-Devil, but we do well to be afraid of the little devils; of the evil-minded persons all about us, who can build "principalities and powers" and poison business, politics, and social relations until it is almost dangerous to live, and increasingly difficult to bring up children in the fetid atmosphere in some communities which these evil persons create.

Regardless of how our first parents were tempted, the rest of us have many times been sorely tempted of devils; and judging from court records, it seems as if many men and women have been married to devils.

¶ But the idea that people can be and are bewitched by evil spirits from realms beyond, so fully credited in the past, was probably a superstition handed down from times when people believed in good and bad gods.

In Scriptural times all forms of sickness, all kinds of sin, and all temptations were attributed to the presence and influence of evil spirits.

The epileptic boy was thought to have a very fierce devil, and the badly insane were supposed to be possessed by a legion of them.

That human beings would have sinned without the seductive influence of an evil spirit is morally certain.

To fight a winning battle against temptation and sin, we must dismiss the old dragon who was cast down from Heaven from our thoughts and direct our attention to something that is nearer and more dangerous—and, fortunately, more comprehensible.

3. What Is Sin?

¶ Sin begins when we entertain a harmful thought and completes itself by doing a harmful deed.

There is no sin in thinking an injurious thought if we condemn it and dismiss it from our minds when we recognize its evil character.

Whoever harms himself, his neighbor, or his God by *harboring* injurious thoughts of any kind, or by performing overt acts in their fulfillment, has sinned.

Whoever does an injury without knowing it, has simply made a mistake.

If, however, his ignorance was due to carelessness, past or present, then his carelessness was a sin.

All perverse ignorance is a crime.

Life, however, is not simple, for sometimes we can not avoid inflicting one of two injuries; then to inflict the greater injury is sin.

For example, to send a young man to war is to do him immediate harm, but if not to send him to war will in the long run do him and others more harm, then it becomes the country's duty to send him at the risk of his losing his life.

Often, also, a choice must be made between two good courses of action, and not to choose the better course is to sin.

¶ When it comes to specifying, we may modify our opinions as to which specific things are harmful, but if we are normal men and women we never lose the conviction that it is right to benefit and wrong to harm.

Exactly what things we ought to do and which things we should not do, is largely a matter of individual enlightened judgment.

Some think it a dreadful thing to play cards; others honestly regard card playing as an innocent, restful amusement.

Intelligence must first determine whether card playing is beneficial or injurious before the conscience has anything to work upon.

The same rule applies to conduct everywhere.

We all agree that some things are harmful while we

honestly disagree regarding the injurious effects of others.

The doubtful things must remain doubtful until we get more light; therefore, we do not dwell upon the question which specific deeds are wrong, but upon the nature of a sinful thought or act.

To do what one thinks is harmful, whether it is or not, is to sin. Or if one has had the mind but has not done wrong simply because he did not have the opportunity, nevertheless, he is guilty; or if he is not sorry for past sins, it is proof that he still has the sinful mind.

4. Why Do We Sin?

¶ Why do we think and do things which we know to be harmful to ourselves and others?

Not necessarily because we consciously desire to be wicked, but because we have a compelling desire for the immediate pleasure that a passing circumstance affords, and for that reason try to persuade ourselves that it will not be very injurious after all.

We begin life by grasping every desirable thing that is not taken from us by our wiser seniors; and this we do quite innocently and without sin.

As a little child, we do not know what a desire is for but to be immediately gratified.

When we are old enough to be taught that desires must not be gratified, just anywhere and any time because of the harm that will follow such indiscriminate actions, then there inevitably comes a strain on the will.

These appetites and desires are not sinful, but natural and absolutely necessary to life; our unwillingness to control them is sin.

Consequently when a child is asked to control his normal desires and keep them subservient to rational and moral ends he faces that which is no mean task.

¶ Strain is bound to come upon the will and it is not primarily due to a sinful nature, nor temptations from a devil, but a thing to be expected in an untrained and undisciplined life.

And besides, the commands of the parent often seem arbitrary and unreasonable to the child; and, sad to say, they frequently are.

If the child's will to deny himself breaks down in presence of a desire that is too strong for him to control he will fight for what he wants and struggle to get that which he thinks he is being wrongfully deprived of; but his fierce struggle to overcome difficulties is not so much sin as a proof of his virility; though it is usually regarded by older people as a proof of his native sinfulness.

Later, when he actually begins to sin, he wishes that it were not wrong to get and do that which he likes; the sense of guilt takes away a part of his pleasure while he is eating the stolen cooky; which nevertheless tastes very good.

We do wrong, to begin with, because we want what we want and peace is out of the question until we get it; but not because we want to do wrong.

No one does wrong for wrong's sake before he has

become very much hardened in sin; but in the very nature of things there is a fierce conflict between strong desire on one hand, and conscience and fear on the other.

We all have to learn through much experience and practice to turn promptly from what we should not have or do, to something else that will at once absorb our attention and awaken new desires.

¶ We live in a world filled with good things and many desires awaken within us that cannot be gratified every time we are conscious of them.

Most pleasures, in themselves, are both beautiful and right.

None of them, however, may be enjoyed by just *any one* at *any* time.

It is sometimes wrong to work; and it is sometimes wrong to stop work—even to pray.

The natural pleasure derived from food, exercise, sex, and from the many other sources of pleasure is sacred, and cause for gratitude; but to partake of these pleasurable things whenever and wherever we like, is sinful.

To eat food that is not ours, just because we are hungry, or to take another person's money just because money would be useful to us, is a crime; in short, to gratify any desire, however proper in itself, with no more sense of propriety than if we were animals, is sin.

God does not miraculously take away our appetite for food to keep us from stealing; nor remove our capacity for sexual pleasure to keep us from gratifying it unlawfully.

Over against our capacity and desire for immediate pleasure and the temptation to short cuts, stand reason and conscience.

When reason and conscience approve, the gratification of any desire brings great happiness to which no after qualms are attached.

Likewise the prompt rejection of a desire that may not properly be fulfilled brings happiness.

If we succeed in shifting our attention from the regions of thought that feed and sharpen an improper desire we can usually keep the upper hand of it.

In the hundred thousand shifts of circumstance in every life, almost everything by turns is lawful and unlawful, permissible and forbidden.

¶ "Why did God make wrong deeds pleasurable?"

He did not make the *wrong* of the deed pleasurable.

The act itself and the pleasure it affords are both right, and matters for thankfulness.

The wrong connected with the deed is the work of the doer and he cannot make that wrongness pleasurable to himself; which is also a matter of thankfulness.

A deed, good in itself, is wrong to perform when we cannot perform it without moral or physical injury to ourselves or others.

Not even to keep us from sinning can God change the good nature of things and take their pleasure away from them for the time being.

He wishes us to have our share in the delights of life. and lures us on by our desires to win them; then wisdom

and conscience step in to dictate that it has been decreed that they must be won lawfully or we shall suffer and cause others to suffer.

¶ "Why did God not so make us that it would give us pain to do wrong and happiness to do right?"

As far as possible that *is* the way he made us.

When first we do a conscious wrong, it hurts in spite of the accompanying pleasure; at first, it gives us both pain and pleasure to do wrong.

That is why we are tempted; if we were incapable of pleasure there would be no temptation; or if we had no conscience there would be no temptation; or if it cost us no effort to defy it, conscience would lack opportunity for development.

The conflict between the desire to fulfill a pleasure and the desire to escape giving conscience offence is what we mean by temptation.

It is just this unavoidable conflict that puts a strain upon the will.

It is impossible to see how it could have been arranged differently.

A complex life in a complex world gives a human being no other choice oftentimes but to choose between pleasures possible to him on the one hand, and the painful sense of guilt and the fear of punishment on the other hand attached to them.

Moreover, the severest strain does not always come from having to choose between the positively good and the positively bad; the greater struggle sometimes

comes from having to choose between the good and the best.

¶ For example, a young man came to me and told me that he had worked hard, saved money, and bought forty acres of land.

Now, however, the conviction had come to him that he ought to go to college; that he could be more useful in the world if he were an educated man.

But to go to college, he would have both to sell his land and go in debt.

Whereas, if he did not go to college he could keep his land and probably have another forty acres earned during the time it would require to complete a college course.

Now it was perfectly proper for a young man to work, save, and buy land as he had done and still wished to do; it was a noble example to many a youth.

The alternative course of going to college, with the immediate sacrifices that it involved was likewise a noble thing to do.

The young man was greatly tempted while choosing between good and better; between a lesser good that was near at hand, and a greater good that was remote, and costly.

God himself could not so plan life and the universe that a young man would be able to acquire a four years college course in a day and that without work or cost.

¶ Choosing whether he would be a *good king* or a *patient, suffering Messiah* brought to Jesus a harrowing temptation.

Though the world greatly needed a good king, yet it needed a Messiah much more; and if Jesus had chosen to be a good king, after seeing it was not the best thing he could be, he would have sinned.

The young man sinned when he gave up his education for his land.

However, he still had a chance to make the second best use of his life; he could be a noble, intelligent farmer.

But if he continued throughout his life to decide in favor of the lower choices, simply because they were easier and brought immediate results he would descend from a second to a lower rate character in an indefinite progression downward.

¶ Tito Melema, in *Romola,* is the classical example of a handsome, winsome, æsthetic person who did nothing worse for a time than to choose the easier course.

This way of choosing brought him at first much pleasure and applause; in the end his *craving for pleasure and happiness became a disease.*

At last, his will atrophied, his body on fire, and his soul inflamed with false ambition, he had degenerated into a squirming serpent that would thrust his poisoned fangs into anything, however sacred, that stood in the way of the attainment of his illicit desires.

Now Tito Melema did not become a cruel, vicious devil because he wanted or intended to be a devil; at first he was guilty of no more monstrous intent apparently than a uniform choice of the easier way for the time being.

Yet his sin passed beyond the ordinary stages of selfishness and became a *deadly disease;* his whole nature was set on fire by it and fiercely demanded gratification of every desire without delay.

Tito Melema knew both refined and coarse pleasures; he also knew hell; but he never knew the noble joy of breaking his life to bit and bridle and driving with a close rein.

¶ How could we be placed in a world, fit to live in, that would not bring upon us a due measure of strain and temptation?

Think of the discipline there is in so beautiful and small a matter as serving at your own family table: a nice, thick, juicy beefsteak is before you, for which you have appropriately given thanks; your appetite and power to digest your food are good; a wife and children whom you love are seated around the board; everything is ideal and heavenly; there is no enemy and nothing hostile visible or invisible, anywhere about the house.

The moment has come and you are ready to serve; how are you going to do it?

Are you going to give the others all the best cuts and keep the poorest for yourself? Or will your course be the reverse?

I shall make no confessions further than to say, I have felt the strain on my will many times.

Our Polish scrub woman remarked that when they have a pie at their table, her husband takes one-half of it and leaves the other half for her and their four children.

No spirit from hell suggested that caper—he would be too much of a gentleman.

¶ Why we have made such a mystery of the origin and nature of sin I cannot understand; for the facts about sin seem to lie on the surface.

It is very evident why we sin; our wills are not strong enough to bear the strain of such temptations as are involved in life itself.

The problem of sin is to know how to get rid of it; to know how to strengthen the will to avoid temptation, and how to resist it when it is unavoidable.

Why our wills are weak, and how they may be strengthened, are subjects of the greatest importance.

5. Who Is to Blame for Sin?

¶ Insofar as he is able to avoid it, the one who sins is to blame.

But the blame does not end with him, for all who have had a share in the weakening of human wills; all who have helped in any way to create evil environments that inevitably lead to an increase of sin, share in the guilt which they have shared in producing.

Any of us might be placed under circumstances that would overpower the resistance of our wills and lead us to commit a gross sin; situated as we are even, we are not without sin in its milder forms; and constantly have to repent and ask God's forgiveness.

In addition, we may foolishly put ourselves under such conditions as will prove too much for us and lead to

gross sin, or we may be placed there by the cunning of others.

For there are assaults of temptation possible whose outcome no one may predict.

¶ These are what was in the mind of Jesus when He told His disciples to pray that they might not be led into temptation.

All paltering with temptation should be avoided; for no one knows when he may pass the point where escape is no longer possible.

Therefore, if we do not avoid hesitation in dealing with temptation we have taken the first step in sin.

If ever the situation becomes so alive that the urge to act can drive the will into a corner, yielding is inevitable.

"Playing with fire," as it is called, often winds its victim in coils of temptation that hypnotize him and paralyze his inhibitive powers.

This accounts for much sin that is a great surprise to the public on its exposure and a greater surprise and humiliation to the offender.

¶ These highly wrought psychic states are no indications of any fault in the way we were made; for when reason, conscience, and emotion all combine to lift us from ordinary states to our highest psychic moods, we are able to face any crisis; we may face martyrdom, if our cause demands it, with all the joy of going to a feast.

But when such highly wrought states are allowed to develop out of a tyrannical evil impulse apart from reason

and conscience, the most debasing sins and the foulest crimes may be committed.

The criminal, and the martyr for truth, are supported in their unusual deeds by the same psychic power.

The criminal has prostituted the gift to base uses, the martyr has glorified it.

As often as life may be made to glow with feeling, that condition of soul makes work and duty a joy.

Not until we have become morally insane can we commit crime in cold blood.

But we are not required to do right in cold blood; there is a *constraining* power in goodness.

We may, *so to speak,* put ourselves in such a position as to be tempted to do right.

No one has discovered the real secret of life until he has first hand acquaintance with this fact.

¶ Whether we are finally swept into hell or into heaven it will be on the crest of a psychic wave.

Therefore, look well after the heart, for out of it are the issues of life.

"If there be any virtue and if there be any good, think on these things." And if we do they will as certainly lift us up as dwelling on wrong thoughts will drag us down.

The things upon which our thoughts habitually dwell, whether they be good or evil, finally have their way with us.

Whoever would certainly avoid disaster to himself and

others must not, for the fun of it, speed his automobile on a city street.

¶ We have now come to the heart of the problem and to the seat of our responsibility; if we really want to augment our willpower to do right, we must exercise our wills in shortening the time required to slay a temptation, fortify them by thinking such thoughts, by engaging in such work, and by keeping such company, as will add intensity to our stored-up emotional urge to do right.

We must take a vow of total abstinence from the folly and sin of playing with fire; and from that which is only a little less dangerous, the folly of falling into lassitude and indifference toward the great interests of society.

It is absolutely necessary that we should find something worthy to interest us; but we must learn that every desire gratified, good or bad, will appeal to us for a repetition.

Honesty, love, the desire for knowledge, all these things are habits.

Our whole being is ever tending to organize itself into a complex that will become a blessing or a curse.

¶ We must open our eyes to see that the subtler sins of respectable people tend to destroy the whole fabric of society, to injure the environments of life that we all share in common, and to increase sin and misery of every kind.

We must come to understand and act on the understanding that we have all shared, in a measure, the sin and guilt of the race.

It is a dreadful thing to become a debauchee who is

capable of corrupting other lives and blasting the hopes of their friends for them; and it is no less a fearful thing to join the great company of respectable sinners who mildly poison all fountains of life and cause nations to sink into decay.

Coarse vices represent madness and those who indulge in them are usually hunted down and suppressed; but those who commit respectable sins go unmolested until ruin overtakes society as a whole.

Though brutal sin is frightful and dastardly, yet it is not the principal cause of social decay; the brutal sinners are too few, and too much feared by society, for it to allow them to undermine Christian civilization.

¶ The real destroyers of civilization are the many conventional sinners whose god is pleasure, whose glory is prestige, and whose heaven is a well-regulated selfish life.

In torment shall they lift up their eyes when they have finished their work and caused society to disintegrate.

With all sinners, coarse and refined, Jesus pleads with outstretched hands; but He has no pleasures to offer except the joy of honest brotherhood and the love of truth and righteousness.

Those who want nothing but loaves and fishes turn upon their heels and go away. They find nothing pleasing and much that is displeasing in Him.

All who turn from Christ, from the inspiring vision of His kingdom, from the comforting and constraining love of God, and from the sustaining and uplifting influ-

ence of Christian fellowship—these are they who are to blame for the sin and sorrow of the world.

It is not so much the kingdom of God beyond the sky that we need to think about as the kingdom of God on earth.

6. Will God Damn a Sinner?

¶ I do not know, but I do know that sinners will damn God.

They will feed upon His bounty, ride upon His powers, let Him carry their load, and make Him their slave; they will do everything but allow Him to become their senior partner in business and their bosom companion in pleasure.

They are only too ready to use God's energy and His treasures of wealth for their own poor purposes; but when He seeks a controlling voice in their business, and in their lives, they refuse their consent and continue to make Him the slave of their selfish desires.

And when they have damned God, they have thrice damned themselves and the innocent with them.

And when they succeed in breaking down civilization, or when they impoverish the earth, or when they force the weak to cry for work and bread, or when they plunge the world into war, or when they drive the business world to madness, or when they arouse bestial passions, or when they cause pandemonium to break loose in murders and riots and pestilential plagues, then they

cry out in their madness and unbelief, "Now where is your good, wise, and all-powerful God?"

Through their selfishness, blindness, and disregard of God's overtures, they have sent Him to hell; they have sent Him to suffer with the damned.

And this very day, in many a hell on earth, God is calling to His good sons and daughters to suffer and sacrifice yet more with Him until He can lead the rebels out of the hell which they have created for Him, for themselves, and for helpless women and children.

The saddest thing about hell is that God and His good children have to go to hell with the bad; with those who have had most to do with the hell-making.

7. Is There Any Value in Sin?

¶ When sin has run its course, its insanity, its heinousness, its pain, and its sorrow, stand somewhat fully revealed.

When we see how much it costs God and humanity to clear up the wreckage of sin and to renew the world in love and righteousness, it should have the value of increasing our hatred for all evil.

Sin also should have the value of revealing the depths of love; for the love that voluntarily enters the flames to rescue the perishing, stands in glorious contrast with the sin that lighted the flames.

The love that forgives its enemies and suffers with them, shines with infinite splendor against the inky black-

ness of sin that will work ruin before it will deny itself a fleeting pleasure.

There is some value in knowing where hell is, and how it hurts.

If sin, by its awful consequences, has made us fear it and hate it, then it has resulted in some good.

We ought to be made safer and stronger by knowing these things.

If we insist upon forming the acquaintance of sin and suffering, it is important that we get an elementary knowledge of them in this primary school.

God is not going to trust us with greater things as long as we show that we are not safe to be entrusted with small things.

¶ Shall we go on sinning then that grace may abound and that we may gain a deeper knowledge of sin?

God forbid! There will be plenty of sin left for our painful enlightenment after we have done our best to prevent it all.

There is no good in picturing the horrors of sin unless we put them in contrast with the joys of righteousness.

Conversely, while redeeming love is our gospel, yet it is never love divorced from law.

Many of us know how to enjoy our work and duty when we are busily engaged in doing them; but there is not one of us who could long be trusted if there were not some inexorable laws back of him that he could not violate with impunity.

A good business man truly loves his business; but if

his business would prosper just the same if he did not attend to it faithfully, he would not long continue in it for the mere love of it; his carelessness would soon destroy his love and business both.

There is probably no joy greater than that afforded by the Christian ministry, but if a minister's work would prosper just the same without him on the job, laxness would surely follow.

¶ When one meets a living temptation, it is good to have the deterrent consequences of sin as well as the constraining power of love and truth help to save him.

Love and truth can not be fully taught except against a background of hate and falsehood.

The knowledge that heaven is at hand and that hell is but a step away, gives one the best fighting chance to win the former and avoid the latter.

I do not think we preach love too much; but to the contrary, because we isolate it from the deeper facts of life, our picture of love is weak and quite lacking in attractiveness.

CHAPTER IX

DID MAN "FALL UPWARD"?

Was there a human "fall"?
Could man have avoided sin altogether?
Has man won character through sin?
Does the law of evolution guarantee progress will continue?

¶ Did man fall "upward"?

Some contend that he did; that his first sins were in the direction of self-discovery and self-development; that his present state of character and intelligence is not due to a fall from a perfect state, but to an upward movement through many mistakes and sins from a lower condition.

¶ Opposed to this view is the belief that one full-grown man and one full-grown woman were created instantaneously; the man from dust, the woman from one of the man's ribs; and that from the first moment of their existence their mental and moral capacity was perfection itself.

From the hour of his creation, the man was able to walk and talk with God who was present with him in human form.

This first man was miraculously endowed with a lan-

guage that was adequate as a medium of self-expression and ample for the conveyance of all that God wished to communicate to him.

While he had no one but God with whom he could talk —before the woman was created—yet his linguistic ability was sufficient for him without hesitation to give names to all the animals and birds as they filed past him at God's command; sufficient enough for him to remember these names and pass them on to posterity.

The man and his wife were also born full-grown morally and were easily equal to rendering obedience to God in every particular; so morally capable were they that their eating of a forbidden apple was an act of unpardonable sin; an offense so needless and inexcusable that it merited eternal punishment for them and all their posterity.

For their single act of disobedience, God pronounced the sentence of death upon them and cursed the earth with weeds and briars to make them earn their living by the sweat of their brow.

And the woman was still further burdened by having childbirth made painful.

¶ The moral breakdown was as sudden and complete as their creation had been—according to this view—and the change of environment so swift and drastic, that it is hard to see how this method of creation worked out, by its own testimony, in anywise superior to that of evolution.

My own opinion is that of the two methods, that of evolution has many advantages over its rival.

Whatever the facts may be, it is now very commonly believed that man began where the highest animals of *that day* left off and parted company with him.

If this be true, then man began with such means of communication and habits of life as he inherited; a heritage not to be despised.

When self-consciousness began to dawn, man had crossed the line which separated the "manlike" from man; he had become endowed with a soul.

And this enrichment of his nature could not have taken place until a body for it to inhabit had reached a degree of development approximating that of the present human body.

Of course, the first men would not have the refinement that comes only with the development of articulate speech and general culture.

Human beings of the present time without these are anything but attractive. We do not need to go far to find people who are more repulsive than animals.

¶ In the beginning of human life, no less than now, one hermit person could not have improved his condition without other persons to associate with him and help him do it.

Therefore, there must have once been a primitive society engaged in getting its first simple lessons in human experience.

There were fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and neighbors. Young men found it no more necessary to marry their sisters then than now. According to this

view the problem as to where Cain got his wife drops out.

¶ If men rose from ancestors on the highest possible animal level, they had from the beginning of their human experience physical training, five cultivated senses, and well-formed habits that enabled them to cope with their primitive environments.

With these habits to guide them and their stern enforcement of these rules of life to hold them in check (for even animals severely discipline their young) they were much safer than would have been possible if they had not known the language of the forest and the cunning of all its other inhabitants.

From the very beginning these primitive human beings would know, as well as their ancestors knew, how to provide themselves a living and how to protect themselves and care for their young.

They would have their Joshuas as truly as we have had our Washingtons and Grants. Even cattle and wolves have their leaders, mighty in valor.

Of course, men were not cultivated in the beginning; even now, there are a good many people left without culture who are less clean than the animals.

On first emerging from the animal state, men would not know how to be as morally degraded as some men now are in modern civilization.

There is all the difference in the world between the coarseness of a primitive, uncultivated man of the forest and the coarseness of a man who has degenerated in the midst of intellectual and moral culture.

Even our finest college men can look pretty rough customers after working awhile in far-off lumber camps; and our uncouth ancestors doubtless looked much more shaggy and unkempt.

Nevertheless, there must have been some pretty rugged and purposeful individuals among them or they would have been exterminated.

¶ And we know they did more than hold their own, they advanced.

Yesterday I picked up a paper which raised the question of whether man was "created or evolved."

But there are no such alternatives in the mind of an evolutionist who believes in God; to him the alternatives are, did God create man from the dust in a minute, directly, or did God create him from the dust by the slow process of evolution?

It is easy for us all to believe that God used the best method.

So far as there is any evidence of which of these two methods He used, it is all on the side of evolution.

The Christian evolutionist believes that God makes everything, that He makes the human spirit in his own image, and that He dwells in His child to help him through all his upward struggles.

However He did it, God never made a body for a human spirit that He was not willing to live in Himself.

¶ If we should take a cultivated twentieth-century man and wife, who know a thousand and one things that the first human beings could not have known, and put them

in the wildest jungles without any equipment but their bare hands, exiled for good from civilization, it is a serious question whether they could keep alive at all.

The innocent and inexperienced Adam and Eve of tradition would have been the most poorly equipped persons imaginable to win out in a struggle for existence in the primeval forest.

If only one man and one woman had come to our American shores in some Mayflower vessel there is not the least likelihood that they would ever have been heard from again.

How infinitely better a primitive race of men, balanced and buttressed by well-formed habits in a familiar environment, would have been equipped to survive.

¶ And a sudden fall in morals on their part would have been far less probable.

Such a young man might have killed some one belonging to a hostile neighboring tribe, but he would not likely have killed his own brother over a religious dispute as Cain slew Abel.

If one takes the word of the traditional view of creation, then after the briefest period, the situation of the race was far worse than that under evolution.

According to the traditional account, in the face of a perfect start, practically all men became savages in a few generations; and in a comparatively short time so wicked that God had to destroy them all except Noah and his family.

In comparison with such a grewsome picture as this, a

good bit of rudeness and crudeness to start with would be infinitely preferable.

It is the habit of cultivated sinners to think themselves much superior to unrefined saints—but they are not.

After the human family became actually sinful, as it certainly did, its future offspring were neither better nor worse by reason of how the human family came to its immoral state.

At the present time, we are not so far removed from the savage but that a person reared in the best of Christian homes may become a beast in less than ten years.

¶ Unless he prefers to leave it an open question, each one must choose between the two competing methods of introducing man into the world; but certainly it would be very unbecoming and un-Christian for us to fight about how we came to be imperfect and destroy the good results of the work of correction that has already been performed.

1. Was There a Human Fall?

¶ Nothing is more certain than that there was.

Throughout all history there have been retrograde movements in morals; and at the present time, we see much of it going on around us with our own eyes.

The further man is removed from the animal, the farther and harder he may fall.

The native ferocity of early tribes is soon spent and is not comparable with the settled moods of moral degradation that may and do occur among civilized men.

When imagination, intelligence, and will take up their

abode in a physical body located in the midst of an opulent and complex society the possibility of a real and dreadful fall is imminent.

Man's power to image things not present is a source of great temptation to him not known, or but little known, to the animals.

Through his ability to make absent things present to his mind, man creates a desire almost as compelling as if the object of his ambition, or the object of his lust were before his eyes.

¶ Yet the power of imagination is necessary to all invention, to all great achievements in the arts, the sciences, and the virtues of civilization.

Without imagination man could never rise; neither could he fall very low.

An animal has strong physical appetites, but they are not kept at white heat all the time by a vivid imagination.

He has rest from the urge of appetites for the most part until they may be gratified in a natural and necessary way.

But through his imagination, man may keep his various desires and passions aroused a large share of the time.

And he is inclined to do this because of the pleasure which it gives him; but if he harbors wrong thoughts, desires will be awakened and intensified that will lead him inevitably to sin; desires that will call louder and louder for complete satisfaction in overt act.

If one thinks about anything long enough and visualizes

it clearly enough, he will try to get it whether it is right for him to have it or not.

Not to mention more serious lapses, this is the reason why some people buy automobiles when they cannot afford them.

¶ Moreover, man's possible pleasures and blessings are a thousand times more numerous than those of any animal; and the well-being of society imposes a thousand prohibitions upon him unknown either to animals or to primitive men.

All this brings a strain upon the human will that is out of all proportion to the strain that is felt by, and in, simple animal life.

Yet the power to make remote things present and alive is a divine endowment. Rightly exercised it makes man a genius; it guarantees his progress in every line of noble attainment; like faith, it is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

¶ In addition to the imagination, a highly developed reason is a source of great temptation. Man's reason can devise ways and means of gratifying his glowing desires, the evil as well as the good.

Highly developed reason creates temptations in new forms that cannot exist where the intelligence is low.

Not only is there initial pleasure in the desires which men keep alive through imagination, but there is intensified pleasure in devising ways and means for the complete fulfillment of such desires; and when to these two strong sources of temptation there is present yet a third, a

powerful will, we begin to see how the modern wickedness of man may put the beasts of the forest and the cave men to shame.

In comparison with modern reprobates, the cave men would be classed among saints.

¶ The modern man has often fallen far below any sinful condition known to the primitive man.

The brighter the heaven to which one may attain, the deeper and hotter the hell to which he may descend.

Not only in the beginning of human history did man fall, but many of his offspring have kept on falling in spite of all that the opportunities and restraints of Christian civilization could do to help them.

The staggering fact that confronts us is that so many go on falling in each succeeding generation; all fall a little, and many fall hard and low.

This is why Christian progress is so retarded.

The Christian ideals and aspirations of the better older people are never altogether fulfilled because so many of the rising generation never learn them or else forget them.

Our fond hopes that children will profit by the example and precepts of their Christian parents are not always realized; and our expectation that the rare opportunities of education will produce an educated society fit for democracy is in a measure disappointed.

The extent to which people still fall in our day is appalling; and the excuse for it now, as in the story of the Garden of Eden, is that forbidden fruit is good for

food, a delight to the eyes, and something that will make one wise.

¶ In some quarters, there is more rising than falling; in others, the falling is quite in excess of the rising.

The rise and fall of communities and the rise and fall of nations make up the greater portion of human history.

Few if any are the instances where national disaster has not been preceded by general moral decay.

The old seers who discoursed on the fall of man, very likely failed to see all the fine shades of a completed philosophy, but they were far better observers than some present day writers who fail to recognize and allow for any fall in the history of the race.

Some modern writers, if they have comfortable quarters, plenty to eat, leisure to write, and a fad notion to promote, can see nothing behind or ahead of the present race but steady improvement.

Weak nations may be exploited, a continent of empires may sink, the poor may curse, starve, and rot because so-called civilization is "red in tooth and claw," and yet some people will see no fall of man in the process.

They never will see it until they, too, are tumbled out of their snug berths and feel the consuming fires of a human-made hell.

¶ Many of the pitiable wretches on earth are not much to blame for the fall of man in process in our day; some of them were never high enough to fall; they have been kept down by the iron heel of those who have fallen upon them.

But many of those who did get high enough to fall have done so and have dragged others down with them.

Leaving out of the account our neglect and evil treatment of uncivilized tribes, many of the weaker nations are elbowed aside politically, economically, socially; they are frequently imposed and trampled upon by powerful bullying nations who not only rob them for a little profit, but drug them with opium and set them on fire with spirituous liquors.

For a century America has sent whisky along with missionaries to Africa, and England sent opium to China with her missionaries.

And this is but a sample of what is done by Christian nations to degrade and keep down those whom they should help.

¶ In spite of all our sins, nevertheless there has been enough moral progress in the world to prove that progress is possible; and enough to encourage all right-minded people to take a firmer hand in the great work of civilizing and Christianizing the race.

To have a few people fall clear to the bottom, would be nothing like so discouraging as to have great numbers fall half-way, for that would jeopardize the whole structure of organized society.

The production of a few supermen brings no comfort and encouragement unless the bulk of society can be induced to raise their standards of intelligence and true brotherhood.

¶ Until we recognize the fact that men can fall, and fall hard; until we learn why they fall and how to prevent it, we can move forward with no reasonable sense of social security.

Low as ancient civilizations have fallen, modern civilization is capable of a far greater fall, and we shall do well to act upon this fact before it is too late.

2. Could Man Have Avoided Sin Altogether?

¶ It does not appear that he could; at least, none of us have.

A baby can not know right from wrong because at the beginning it knows nothing. It must learn from hard knocks.

It is a beautiful and innocent impulse that causes baby to reach for the pretty light of the burning candle; but there is no danger of anyone forming the habit of burning himself.

In most things, however, the situation is different; pleasure and not pain accompanies our actions, and it may be some time before we learn whether a particular action is right or wrong.

Our judgment has developed to the point where we know many things to be wrong that were not known to be wrong in the beginning.

When man first tasted the fermented juice of grapes, he had no more reason for thinking it wrong to drink grape juice than to drink water.

The growing desire for it would not appear to be

wrong until intoxication followed with its brood of evil consequences.

Then it would appear that it was wrong to drink too much wine; but while attempting to use it moderately the desire might increase until a man would be led to excess in spite of himself. Thereupon he might decide in view of this danger that it was wrong to drink wine altogether.

¶ Whatever one's views on total abstinence may be, at least this will serve to illustrate how man has had to learn the difference between right and wrong.

Rest after labor is both pleasant and necessary, but just how much one should rest is sometimes difficult to decide; and before one is aware of it he may have begun to form the sinful habit of laziness.

Sin is often a question of more or less, rather than a question of this or that.

In most things, the human race has had to learn what was right and wrong by experimentation; but by the time that man had made up his mind what was right, he had in many cases formed wrong habits and created conditions that made it difficult for him to readjust his conduct.

When a man has grown wealthy by a method that proves in the course of time in the judgment of others to be wrong, or not best for the common good, it is difficult to make him see that it is wrong and often more difficult to get him to change his methods.

Where our interests are at stake, it is almost impossible

for us to see how any course of action is wrong which all good people in the past have followed.

¶ The more experienced members of society may see the harmfulness of many things in which the less experienced are unable to see any harm at all.

Consequently there are always those who feel that the imposition of certain standards is simply the effort of one class to take advantage of another.

We should probably be surprised to know how often children in good homes believe themselves to be treated unfairly; who think that they are denied innocent pleasures because parents want to have their own way.

It is by no means an easy thing for a child to learn which things are right and which are wrong; especially when he sees so many standards in vogue by people who have friendly associations with his parents.

A little boy who was affectionate, and generally obedient, expressed the opinion to his parents one day that this business of doing or not doing certain things was merely a question of size and authority.

He was looking forward to the time when he would be big enough to do as he pleased. It was not that he wanted to do wrong; he had a new idea which he thought was valid.

¶ His father told him that because big people knew more, they were under greater obligations to do right than when they were small; that he did not expect his little son to be as good now as when he became older and wiser.

That, he explained, was why he had sympathy and patience with him when he did not render prompt obedience.

But seeing that the child was not yet convinced, the father said: "I am under greater obligation than you are to do right because I am older and know better why I should. So if in anything I do wrong, please tell me; and if I do not obey, you may punish me in any way you like. Of course, if it is a question of judgment my judgment must rule because I am older and wiser. But I promise to be honest with you, and if we both agree after due consideration that a certain thing is wrong, then you may punish me in any way you like if I do not obey."

Then the father tried to explain to the child why certain things were right and other things were wrong and why we all were greatly tempted at times to do things that we should not do.

He also tried to get the child to see that none of us could be good without surrounding ourselves with good influences nor without practicing to be good just as he practiced throwing a ball in order to be able to throw hard and straight.

Because the little fellow was just then learning to throw well by incessant practice, the father laid special emphasis upon the necessity of practice in being good.

At last the truth sank into the child's mind that his father, even more than himself, was under authority. In proof of it, soon after this experience when the little

fellow saw a neighbor fall from his carriage while in a state of intoxication, he reported what he saw with great excitement and said, "You see, he did not practice hard enough to be good when he was a boy."

¶ If no one before us had ever sinned, every one of us would, nevertheless, have to go through the struggle of this little boy.

But it makes it much more difficult when we see other people doing wrong things and having a good time, for us to believe that they are wrong.

That every single person from the first man till now, could have grown up in the world without ever having once disobeyed or sinned against God or man is a thing absolutely inconceivable.

¶ At the beginning of the race, while numbers were few, it was possible to live on wild fruits and animals; but the intellectual and moral development of man, not less than his food necessities, compelled him in the course of time to branch out into herding, farming, inventions, and great business enterprises.

Therefore, if men had been able to come through the strain of temptation clean in the first simple stages of their existence, it is not at all likely that they could have routed successfully all the greater temptations of later periods.

Selfish business interests, group habits, and foolish sentiments about rank and precedence would almost certainly have grown up; and provincial and class jealousies would have appeared in society.

Even good people, as we know them, do not like to see their comfortable and snug little world disturbed by outsiders; even in good people, there are a thousand little watch dogs that snarl and bite when people outside their group ask for a reckoning.

And sooner or later there appear what may be called the sins of the good.

¶ The best of people must be brought repeatedly to the light for repentance and reconsecration.

Even a Christian Church that is good enough and energetic enough to succeed will soon discover certain Church sins that have incidentally associated themselves with its zeal and success; to continue to grow in grace even a Church must often repent.

The same thing is true of the minister. If he is devoted, earnest, and successful, he will soon discover little sins of selfishness and ambition that will grow to great size unless they are repented and weeded out of his life.

The greatest saint will soon discover that he is not wholly free from the pride and selfish enjoyment that come from being a saint; hence, he, too, must repent of his sins.

I once knew a man who was as proud as a peacock of the fact that he was not proud.

Of course, men could not have avoided sin altogether. Indeed, the best goodness of which human beings are capable is the desire and determination to become better; the determination to win a wider field in which to honor God and serve their fellow men. "If we say we have

no sin, we lie and do not the truth; but if we repent of our sins, God is just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

¶ Though it is absolutely impossible that the human race could have come all the way from the first man to me without ever having sinned once on the road, yet the race as a whole, and every one of us in particular, might have done very much better and have saved ourselves from much sorrow and shame.

Human beings can no more learn how to live without some mistakes and some sins than they can learn to walk and run without sometimes falling; but when they make no improvement and let a sin become a fixed habit, great guilt and much unnecessary suffering is their portion.

One reason why the moral state of affairs gets to be so bad and local and national crises recur so often is that we do not try as we should to see the race as one family; we fail to visualize the true all-inclusive goal of life; we define right and wrong in the confused light of a thousand little conflicting goals. The result is confusion worse confounded.

¶ Relatively good groups of people sometimes war against other groups equally good; and the vicious are always at their evil practices.

Unless these warring groups of society can unify their interests in the vision of Christ, they will create the hottest and vastest lake of fire that this world has ever known and all be consumed in it.

Now that society has grown so large, so intricate, and so complex, we shall all need to become wiser and better or we shall become much worse.

Our very goodness, with its accompanying material success, has brought us to the place where many readjustments must be made if we are to go forward to greater social achievements.

Our very success may bring a crushing defeat unless we use the great cosmic forces, that have now come into our possession, to bless and not to curse.

4. Has Man Won Character Through Sin?

¶ Through recognizing it, repenting of it, and overcoming it, yes; insofar as he has failed to do these things, no. "Of our vices we can frame a ladder if we will tread beneath our feet each deed of shame."

If, however, we do not tread our deeds of shame beneath our feet, they will form into millstones about our necks to sink us in a sea of corruption.

Through contact with temptation and sin much character has been won and much character has been lost.

The exact proportion between loss and gain no one knows; but the loss to some has been as great as the gain to others.

The army of noble men and women who have progressively overcome their sins and waged a mighty warfare against the encroachments of sin upon God's human family throughout the world, are much stronger and better because of the battles which they have fought.

On the other hand, those who have yielded to temptation and have dragged others down with them have both suffered and caused injury beyond computation.

5. Does the Law of Evolution Guarantee Progress Will Continue?

¶ The all too prevalent idea of this generation that, somehow, things will get better anyway is working tremendous harm. Evolution guarantees progress if we throw our whole lives into the process; but if we neglect to do so, evolution guarantees certain defeat.

¶ Here is an example of what is happening among us: An old man I know dropped his Church. Although he had started going to the bad fast enough to frighten his friends, he felt perfectly secure against calamity in the thought that evolution was working everything up from a lower to a higher state. Yet his deterioration since the time he was the superintendent of a Baptist Sunday School was both pitiful and frightful.

A more stupid man could not be found than one who slackens his pace and lessens his endeavors because he has come to believe in evolution.

One wonders where such a man got his information; or rather, he knows that such a man has practically no information on the subject.

The number of people who are relying on the belief that things will continue to improve simply because they have in the past is the most discouraging feature of this

generation. Actually, many people can be found today who think that about all cause for fear has been removed from the world.

The lowly men who by the help of God climbed the rough and steep paths and lifted the world to the high levels of modern Christian civilization were worthy of more praise than we ever shall be able to bestow upon them; but we who fall from those splendid heights by our greed or lust or easygoing ways, we are the Adams who fall and bring the heaviest curse upon the race.

It takes a full and rounded knowledge of the facts of life and intimate fellowship with our Master to serve, to rejoice, and to suffer like gods if need be for the betterment of all mankind.

¶ Recently, as well as sundry times in the past, there has been much progress downward as well as upward which might have been foreseen; for many of those whose moral natures have atrophied have the keenest and best trained intellects.

And unless we sharpen our wits to match their cunning they will surely defeat us, regardless of how much we implore God to overcome evil.

No one need think that the world will grow any better unless some one helps to make it better.

Let selfishness spread, let the light of God go out in soul after soul, let sin get beyond control, and a general collapse is bound to follow.

Every sin committed means another nail driven into

some innocent hand, another crown of thorns pressed upon some noble brow, another spear thrust into some forgiving heart.

¶ The fact that evolution works both ways, warns us to be doubly careful.

Change the conditions for the worse or leave out any vital factor and the evolutionary tide imperceptibly turns and moves irresistibly toward some undesirable goal.

Even the slightest change in the currents of thought or action has a marked effect; a slight change of view will produce a Holy Roller, or a filthy ascetic, or a sickly sentimentalist, or a Saint Paul, or an unbeliever; every variety of saint and sinner results from a process of evolution; the highest heaven and the deepest hell are achieved by a more or less gradual process.

The method of evolution, properly understood, is one of the most sobering as well as one of the most inspiring truths known to man.

Mere passwords count for nothing before the law of evolution; it sends us unerringly to the place where we belong whether it is to the top of civilization or to the bottom of the rubbish heap; evolution plays no tricks and bestows no unmerited favors.

Whether one goes up or down, it is by a well-established law enforced without fear of favor.

God has gone before us in Jesus to open the way, He dwells in us to illuminate the way, He works in nature's forces about us to guard the way.

A stone-blind individual who is indifferent to Jesus

and to the illuminating presence of God has his face turned toward destruction regardless of where he stands in the social scale.

¶ The law of evolution drives home in its most telling ways its teaching that we must become as eager to learn as little children and that we must render prompt obedience to the laws of our being and to the laws of God's universe in which we dwell.

First the blade of curiosity, then the stalk of careful study, then the full ear of sound life principle and practice; if not, then first, ignorance, next confusion, and then defeat.

If in our extreme conservatism we refuse to let God's plan unfold wealth of life, new to us, we work ourselves and those about us irreparable harm; or if in our extreme and reckless liberalism we build on half truths, we shall be the cause of the fall of the great structure of civilization.

Evolution spells hope or despair according to our attitude toward the inexorable laws of God.

¶ The Garden of Eden was but the tiniest miniature of the paradise which God wishes us to make on this earth; and the fall of the first men, in comparison with the fall that we may suffer, is like a stubbing of his toe by a child in comparison with a fall of a man from a tower which he has built himself.

If sin took from primitive man his garden, our sin may cause empires to crash, and poverty and war to prevail throughout the length and breadth of the earth.

Men who have risen to the position of world conquerors, must do so according to the laws of God or in the end suffer a smashing defeat.

At this stage of our evolution we stand face to face with a choice between a paradise too glorious to picture, and a hell too awful to describe.

God sets the two alternatives before us and offers His boundless aid if we will choose the upward course, but man can not slip out of his responsibility to choose between these alternatives.

We ourselves are the mighty Adams and Eves to whom God is saying, "Ye may freely eat of all but the forbidden fruit."

And the serpents of temptation, that have grown in might and cunning since man began his career, are trying to beguile us by saying, "If ye eat of the forbidden fruit ye shall be well dressed, mighty to rule, and satisfied with much pleasure."

While the earth lasts, the race will remain on trial as to whether it can be trusted with life in the Garden of Eden.

CHAPTER X

WHY DID JESUS DIE?

Did Jesus die to appease the moral indignation of God?

Did Jesus die as a substitute?

Without the shedding of innocent blood, was salvation possible?

What great truths did the old orthodoxy conserve?

How, then, does the death of Jesus aid in our salvation?

¶ Jesus died because His leading countrymen could not endure Him.

His teachings and conduct so irritated, angered, and frightened them that they had Him put to death.

He could have escaped martyrdom by making Himself agreeable or by going away from them; but His character would not permit Him to live differently, and His love would not let Him go away from those who needed Him. "If I go away ye shall die in your sins."

Jesus was put to death because He was like God. If He had been like His enemies, they would have been greatly pleased with Him.

¶ If they had not desired to kill Jesus, God would not have had Him put to death as a preparatory means of saving the world.

It would have been comparatively easy for God to have saved a world that was not blind enough and wicked enough to kill Jesus and the prophets.

There would have been no need of blood—if no one had been wicked enough to shed blood.

History plainly shows, however, that God's human approach to the world has been stubbornly resisted from the beginning until now.

When God lives in human lives, He immediately comes into contact with selfish interests and false ideas.

When God gets expressed in human word and deed, He appears so different from the popular foolish notions of Him that many will not believe that it is He.

Hence, they seek to *crucify* the living God, and continue to *worship* their false idea of God.

¶ When God is no more to them than an idea, He causes selfish men very little trouble; but when He confronts them as a man, He either saves them from their sins or else He irritates them to the point of madness.

When the Pharisees saw their God clearly and humanly expressed in Jesus, they thought He was the prince of devils. So they killed Him in the name of Jehovah, and thought Jehovah was very much pleased with them for doing it. That being true, naturally they had no use for Jesus nor the salvation which He offered.

¶ Since Jesus went away, we later generations have been

inclined to treat even Him as a pleasing idea, merely one that comforts without disturbing overmuch.

A selfish person does not want the real God; he wants to retain his perverted idea of God and his distorted idea of salvation.

In a blind way many people try to save themselves; they try to do and get that which *they* think will be good for them, without knowing what is right and best either for themselves or others.

Many who think they are sure that they would like to live with God in heaven when they die, despise and reject Him when He tries to enter their pleasures and business here.

They love Jesus away off in heaven but would not love Him but hate Him for interfering with their whole way of life if He lived in their city under some different name.

We often laud the Jesus of nineteen hundred years ago because he rebuked the Pharisees; but if His exact duplicate should arise among us today, it is not at all certain who of us would be His friends and who His foes.

¶ A man in our midst who would speak God's mind concerning us and everything we do, would be bitterly opposed by the Pharisees in business, state, and Church; He would be looked upon by many as a fanatic and not as a saviour.

Many of the pleasure-loving middle class, who now call themselves Christians, would forsake Him.

The gunmen of the underworld would not so much as

think of Him unless they learned that He carried money; and then, they would endeavor to rob Him.

All this explains why it costs to save.

We stupidly think we could enjoy God in heaven because there is no serious business on hand there; no work to do, no desires to curb, nothing but singing, rejoicing, and flying about.

I am perfectly willing, however, to take all the consequences of believing that there is no such heaven. Those who think that there is will simply be disillusioned when they die. As sure as there is a heaven, there will be serious business on hand for us there.

¶ The fact remains that the God of Jesus and the Jesus of God have not found overmuch favor among us on earth even since they were nailed to the cross on Calvary.

When Jesus went away, He left disciples who bore His likeness; but most of them were put to death because God dwelt in them.

There are still multitudes among us who praise the Christ of history but despise the history-making Christ of today.

Of late, the killing seems to be more frequent, and the resistance to God and all good, just above the killing line, is tremendous in its pressure and vast in its scope.

Hence the suffering and sacrifice that God and His coöperating sons must still bear in the work of winning and transforming the world.

If in His friendly human approach to the world God were never resisted by anyone at any time, how the

burden would be lifted for those who try to teach, do business, and manage political affairs in a Christian way.

Of course, the vicious will reject God. That is to be expected; but why should so many who bear the name Christian still oppose God's further advent into practical human affairs?

Lip service done a fanciful God at a distance does not count in the face of this rejection of the real God when He comes to us in the practical affairs of daily life.

¶ Why did Jesus die nineteen hundred years ago?

For the same reason that the prophets were stoned; for the same reason that the true aggressive disciples of Jesus today suffer and sometimes die—because men do not love the company of God when He comes too near; when He does some plain speaking with them in human language and human deeds.

In the early days of the Christian era, it was dangerous to be too much like Christ.

Though conditions are not so bad now, yet one who occupies an influential place in the affairs of the world, and is wise, will prepare for opposition and possible death, if he stands by the will of God as unswervingly as did his Master.

There is still great opposition to God when He tries to enter fully into our business, political, and social relations.

Some would like to see God confined to the church edifice; in practice they prefer a Godless world.

All disregard of truth and love in human relations is a rejection of God.

Let us hope that we shall give Him more reverence in the life to come. He will certainly appreciate the change if we do.

1. Did Jesus Die to Appease the Moral Indignation of God?

¶ No. God's righteous indignation was only increased by this additional crime, the greatest crime of the race.

After its killing of Jesus the world was in greater moral arrears than ever before.

If man's disobedience in the beginning warranted his sentence of eternal punishment, then the crime enacted on Calvary called loudly for the intensifying of the torment.

Were a justly condemned prisoner to kill the judge who pronounced sentence, while the judge was making a friendly call upon him in his cell, that exploit would not improve the legal status of the prisoner.

Instead of wiping out the legal guilt of the race, the killing of Jesus did not even reduce but added to it immeasurably.

The committing of a second and worse crime is an odd way to go about canceling the punishment due on the first.

If God's hands were morally tied so that He could not help before, were they not doubly tied after the slaying of Jesus?

If God's love had not been the full equal of His infinite righteousness, certainly He would have abandoned the race when they crucified Him in His beloved Son.

¶ While no one denies that the act was a crime on the part of those who accomplished the death of Jesus, yet many believe that it was accepted by God as a fulfillment of the unsatisfied judgment that rested upon mankind.

They think that before the death of Jesus, God was not morally free to try even, to bring His children to repentance; that notwithstanding God's love was great, He could make no attempt to draw men to Himself as sons without first slaying His Son Jesus.

True, they admit that God called men to repentance before the crucifixion; but this they think He did only because He knew that in due time the crucifixion would occur.

This idea puts God in a position where He could undertake nothing on behalf of His rebellious children unless they would first murder His best-beloved Son.

¶ Surely no one wishes to minimize the righteousness of God; for if He is not faultless there, the world is without a foundation.

But the claim that God could execute a judgment of death upon an innocent person would make Him lacking in all moral discernment; and that, regardless of how divine the victim was, or of how willing he was to be executed.

Regardless of who the executioner was, for God to

sanction the death of Jesus at the hands of His enemies would be a crime.

Many a mother would willingly hang at the hands of justice to spare her criminal son. But the court that would accede to her wish would not only be guilty of a failure to execute the law, but of an act grossly immoral.

Sometimes, among men, the criminal is not brought to trial at all, because some one is willing to reimburse the plaintiff for his loss or injury. As we say, "the crime was hushed up for a consideration."

However, in God's court no one can escape justice.

How God disposes of criminals, we shall consider later; but here let it be said that the love of God would have sought to bring back His sinful children even if Jesus had never been put to death.

2. Did Jesus Die as a Substitute?

¶ Yes, in the sense that a man *drowns* as a substitute when he loses his life in rescuing another.

But Jesus was not a substitute in the sense that He was executed in man's stead.

Sometimes people say, "It is too bad that the innocent have to be punished for the guilty." When closely questioned, however, they admit that they mean nothing more than that the innocent must *suffer* through the wrongdoing of the guilty ones.

True, some evil-minded persons do punish every member of a family if one of its number goes wrong; but God's justice never so miscarries.

Some contend that Jesus who never experienced the sense of guilt in even its mildest forms felt, in a mysterious way, the guilt of the world to be His own; and this they believe to be true because they, too, have a similar feeling.

Well may they have such a feeling; they have shared in the sin of the world. They have both sinned and led others into sin. In comparison with some, their sin may be moderate; yet it is real and entails guilt.

Then again when we see our sin greatly exaggerated in the crime of another, we realize that except for ten thousand mercies lovingly bestowed upon us, we might have committed the same crime.

We know, too, if others had not done them first and made us ashamed and afraid to do them, that we should have done some worse things than we have.

¶ That the innocent must suffer with the guilty, and that they often suffer in the efforts of their compassion to help the guilty, there is no denying; and that this suffering plays a large part in the transformation of the wicked and helps to save them from further sinning with its painful consequences there can be no doubt; but black and white are not more different than the difference between all that and one person assuming the moral guilt of another.

This last simply cannot be done.

However complex God's personality may be there are not three of Him but one.

One part or portion of God was not under the moral

necessity of crucifying another part of Himself, before He could undertake the work of rescuing His children from sin and death.

It is neither necessary nor morally right to whip a good son before a father's offended sense of justice can allow him to seek the reformation of a bad son.

The death of Jesus removed not one whit from the guilt of the race, nor did it make it any more right for God to exercise His love toward His sinful children. To think that it did is to miss the whole point of the sacrificial element in God's love.

3. Without the Shedding of Innocent Blood, Was Salvation Possible?

¶ No. Emphatically no.

In a world that has been blinded and degraded by sin, God can not get near enough to sinful men to reveal Himself and save without getting hurt.

If He is not willing to be hurt, even crucified, *then He must keep out of human life.*

But except He does enter the lives of men, there is no salvation.

Salvation is the identification of God's life with the life of man; in thought, in affection, and endeavor.

The Christian idea of religion *requires* that God shall live in man and that man shall live in God. In the nature of things they were meant for each other, and in no possible way can they get along well apart.

All religions are true just so far as they adjust them-

selves to this idea and make it a reality; and all religions, all branches of the Christian religion included, insofar as they fail in this respect, are false.

Religion that saves never begins until God dwells in some human being.

But as soon as God does that, joy and sorrow begin for Him and the one in whom He dwells; friendships and persecutions follow.

The truth of this statement is not a matter of opinion, but rests upon appalling facts of history.

¶ From the beginning of human life until now, every mile of the way has been stained with the innocent blood of those in whom God was permitted to live; and will continue to be until Divine Love in human hearts eliminates the blind selfishness and cruel hate of mankind.

As long as God dwells only among the stars, and beyond, he will arouse no opposition; but as soon as He begins to live in human beings He excites a desire in some one to crucify Him.

Why does not God limit His dwelling place to the stars and the forces of nature and keep out of man?

Because, by so doing, He could neither save His children, nor make His own life worth while.

Either He must stay apart and lose His children who grovel in darkness and sin, or else He must enter their lives and take the consequences.

In the beginning and even now, a very considerable portion of the human family will first oppose and then kill if not left alone in its evil devices.

Not once, but millions of times God has bled and died in His holy children.

In proportion to their number He has died most frequently in His greatest children, the prophets.

That was because He lived in them, of all men, most fully, and carried on His saving work most aggressively.

If God did not find great souls in which to live, there could be no prophets; and the degradation and despair of a world in which no prophet had ever lived would beggar description.

If the world could not endure God mixing into their affairs in the prophets, of course, men could not bear to see themselves in the blinding light of God in Jesus.

In Jesus, the life of God appeared unclouded and unbiased among men; in Jesus, God spoke and acted in human words and in human deeds.

Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us.

¶ How did the people of Palestine take the simple, human presence of God in Jesus?

Their blind leaders were staggered by His presence; the profiteers, smarting under His words, cried out in their rage; the vicious, thwarted in their purpose, roared with anger; the worldly-wise and cautious declared that He was turning the world upside down.

Nevertheless, some clave to Him and loved Him. These became the nucleus of a new body for Him in which to continue His saving journey through the world. On a higher plane than the world had ever before known, these disciples, nerved to do so by a new sense of this in-

dwelling presence of God, tried to preserve to the end of time the portrait of God that Jesus had engraved upon their hearts.

As a consequence of their fidelity to their Master, and their God, earth became the scene of more martyr deaths in rivers of blood.

If no one since Jesus had been willing to let God live His more abundant life in him, and if necessary die for so doing—why, after these nineteen hundred years we should not know that there ever had been a Jesus. Furthermore, if from this time on no one were to allow God to live in him lovingly and aggressively on the firing line of human wickedness and on the frontiers of human need, then the meaning of Christ's life would fade into a religious superstition and the Church would become chaff before the driving winds of selfishness.

¶ No more than their Master, should true Christians be fanatics.

Jesus did not cry aloud in the streets; He did not exhibit any of the characteristics of a fanatic; he displayed no red flags; He simply radiated the white light of truth, love, and righteousness; He only lived the true life of God in human relations; and for this, and no other reason, He was put to death.

It is certain that the loving, aggressive God will continue to be persecuted and slain in His loyal sons until persecutions and slayings are no more.

He will not abandon human life because of any pain or loss that His presence may bring upon Him and His

good sons and daughters as long as any human being will permit Him to remain.

God in man, is the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world until now; and He will continue to suffer in man until He has won all humanity to Himself.

The length of *our* redemptive suffering on earth is but a day in comparison with the long ages through which God suffers; He lives in and suffers with every generation of men that is born into the world.

¶ That God's at-onement with man in a wicked world is won through much suffering and much blood is the great lesson that Christians have but very imperfectly learned.

Instead of letting God carry on His redemptive work aggressively through them, at any cost the world may impose, they are inclined to make a fetish of the blood of Jesus and thereby turn the religion of Christ into another superstition.

The cost of redemption in the currency of suffering and blood is not less than we have supposed, but infinitely more.

Only the meaning of it all is different, and its magnitude vastly greater than we have realized.

If God is to save the race, He has not yet been crucified for the last time.

In His loving approach to men, Jesus learned to know the joys and sorrows of the Father; and while He delighted in the joys, He refused not the sorrows.

Like Him, all Christians should be happy in their love

for God and in their love for humanity. They should also be happy and grateful because they are loved by God and by all true men. They should find comfort in all the normal activities of life.

At the same time, though not seeking suffering for suffering's sake, yet they should not hesitate to go where God would have them go, to do what God would have them do, to be what God would have them be.

Neither loss nor pain should cause Christians to break faith with God and their fellow-men.

¶ Some professing Christians find life altogether too easy; for the easy life knows nothing of Christ's joy and possesses little of His quality.

Christians who bear no part in the redemptive suffering of God are not citizens of the Kingdom; they are simply "squatters" on some beautiful clearing at the expense of true Christians, and there they build their homes, establish their business, and live in respectable selfishness.

And when they have influenced enough others to follow their example, a serious situation is created that requires more suffering and more blood for its removal.

All fresh sin means new crowns of thorns and new crosses for the innocent. "If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me."

A cross that hurts God and Jesus inexpressibly, but their followers not at all, is a fetish, a glittering charm, a mockery. For the joy that was set before Him, Jesus despised the pain and the shame of the cross.

If easygoing Christians should let God take possession

of their lives and their holdings, they would have to march against the forces of evil in a way that would bring them suffering such as they have never dreamed; and joy of a quality they have never known.

¶ If *we* abandon the world, then God will be compelled to abandon it also.

But if we stand by, God will share with us all the sorrows and all the crosses that an evil world may impose upon us. "A servant is not above his lord; if they persecuted me, they will persecute you."

If Christians could only gain a true insight into the cross of Christ, the cross of God, the cross of mankind in all the heights and depths of its meaning, they would carry it into all highways and byways of business, politics, and social life; they would preach it with love, illumination, and sound ethics; they would drink the cup that God drinks, that Jesus drank, and that the martyrs drained; and then the patient, but resistless, love of God would conquer the world.

Men would then see the wonderful meaning of life, the cruelty of sin, the wisdom and glory of suffering love. And the Church, after its splendid conquests, would return to sing with boundless joy:

> In the cross of Christ I glory,
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
> All the life of sacred story
> Gathers round its head sublime.

¶ The cross is the place where light and darkness meet, where love and hate grapple for the supremacy, where

God and sinners become reconciled. When the cross fades from sight, God vanishes.

We may still commune with our thoughts of Him, but God, as a transforming Presence, is gone; gone because we have refused to go His way.

4. What Great Truths Did the Old Orthodoxy Conserve?

¶ The righteousness of God, the sinfulness of man, redemption through suffering; faith, repentance, forgiveness, regeneration; in the old orthodoxy, all these great truths were keenly perceived and felt and proclaimed with power.

For those who did this magnificent work in their day and generation, we can not be too grateful. Adequate though their explanations of these truths were for the times in which they lived, they now seem inadequate to us and in some respects painful.

Because we feel compelled to explain some of these eternal verities differently, we should not be charged with rejecting them.

¶ God must *punish* the one who sins and not an innocent substitute.

His laws that govern the soul are inexorable; their execution can not be deferred to some far-off judgment day.

God can not make good results follow bad deeds.

All sin immediately injures the one who sins and incidentally injures innocent ones about him.

The moment we sin, our degradation with all its consequences begins whether we realize it or not: and must increase until we experience a change of heart and obey God's laws of love and righteousness.

Even when we have repented of a sin and been forgiven, no small part of our punishment continues.

Though further descent into degradation ceases when our hearts are renewed in love, yet much of the injury we have done *ourselves* and *others* has not yet run its full course.

When our love is restored, new sorrow is felt over past sin and its injurious consequences—especially to others; injuries that we cannot undo.

¶ A parishioner once said to me, "I wasted my youth in wicked living, but God has forgiven me. Nevertheless, there are many things now that I want to do for Him that I can not because I am an ignorant old man."

While his face brightened and the tears welled in his eyes, he said, "There is no doubt that God forgives me, but the fact still remains that I am an ignorant old man, and the injury done by my early sins to others I can so little remedy."

Here he was, happy in the love of God and in the knowledge of sins forgiven, but still suffering for past sins. By no means morbid, he was one of the best men I ever knew, and his influence in his limited sphere was tremendous.

¶ Some think that if they are punished there is nothing

to be forgiven, or if forgiven, they will escape all punishment. Both these ideas are grave mistakes.

We shall be forgiven if we truly repent, but punished shall we be anyway.

No one felt how true this is more keenly, at times, than the great Apostle Paul. He felt that his debt to God and man was so great that he could never pay it.

Pity the Christian who can relate that he was once a great sinner with any satisfaction. On the day that he becomes a good Christian, the memory of his past sins will cut like a knife.

It does no good to dwell upon these painful memories, but however much one may try to avoid them altogether, they will return at times and pierce his soul.

Sin persisted in, in open unrepentance, leads step after step down the way of degradation and piles up injury on top of injury to ourselves and to society.

Sin, if allowed to run its course, becomes a festering sore, a menace of infection to everybody and to every good thing; and sooner or later external suffering is brought upon the sinner and the innocent all about him. ¶ The laws of God, the laws of society, and all the physical and moral forces of the universe make the sinner their target and begin to beat him down.

He is a rebel and as a rebel he must first be defeated, and then won over.

Sins of passion are most quickly detected, but the degradation that comes through the deceitfulness of riches and refined forms of selfishness is in the long run just

as disastrous; it is like the undermining of a continent.

All sin works direct and immediate injury.

If an evil thought or deed improved us, or left us unimpaired, life itself would be a farce.

If there is any moral order operative at all in God's universe, then His measures for the enforcement of the laws of morality must be executed upon the soul as promptly and as definitely as the laws of physics upon clod and star; and experience proves that they are so executed.

Some will say, "that is all true, but it is only the natural consequences of sin."

Of course, it is a consequence, and it is natural; the execution of God's laws is the most natural thing in the world, as unlike as can be to the artificial enforcement of our human legislation by the courts. *In the day thou eatest thereof,* thy life is degraded.

¶ Now God finds it so hard and costly to save us, just because He can not suspend His laws, can not delay their execution, can not punish the innocent for the guilty.

He has to be righteous every moment, and because He is, the violator of law is so greatly injured by his sins that he is hard to reach and to save.

Under the undeviating operation of God's laws, a person may develop both good and bad traits side by side; he may win reward for the one and punishment for the other the same day.

We all find it so in our own lives; our souls may be

improving in certain respects and in other ways degenerating.

In God there is no variableness neither shadow of turning in respect to what is exact and right.

If a sinner makes the slightest move toward God, he is just so far improved plus the reciprocal move of God toward him.

And if a Christian deviates in anything from the will of God, he is so far degraded plus the reciprocal move of God against him.

God can not favor a sinner by punishing Jesus in his stead; that would be a crime.

Thinking that of course He could and that He did do so, was one of the most awful mistakes ever made by Christian teachers.

In so teaching, unintentionally to be sure, but substantially, nevertheless, they disproved the righteousness of God which they had at first so wisely affirmed.

God never made the mistake of punishing the wrong person, nor did He ever fail to punish the right one.

¶ The punishment of sin is blindness, viciousness, and general degradation.

To those who were thus degraded by their sins, Jesus could not go with the mind and heart of God without getting hurt; and without the human presence of the loving, helpful God, they could not be saved.

Through their sins they had lost God, and because of the work of degradation done in them by their sins, they despised God when He entered their swine-pens to bring

them back to His way of thinking and living; their persistent sinning had made them like swine and unwilling to be like their Father.

Because of their sins they had fallen into a pit many fathoms deep; and it cost God something to dig them out. It cost Him His human life and the life of His son Jesus to win their faith, and to transform their character.

¶ In Kansas, some thirty-five years ago, a two-year-old child fell into a "bored" well eighty feet in depth. The child was so near the size of the well that it slipped gradually to the bottom and so escaped immediate death.

The well was too small for an older person to descend, and the child was too young to hold on to a lowered rope. The sorrow-stricken parents could not invert the well nor reverse gravity. Love could not change, nor delay, the execution of any of these laws; but it could dig.

So men dug until they almost fainted, and nearly sweat blood, and finally rescued the child before life was gone.

¶ It means exertions on this order to save a world that has suffered the punishment of its sins; in fact, it means a great deal more.

The child offered no resistance when they laid hold of it to remove it from the well; but many men will fight Him when God has reached them. They do not wish to be removed from their sins.

God is not righteous because He punishes Jesus, who never fell into a pit, but because He lets sinners suffer the consequences of their own wrongdoing and then

helps them out at great cost to Himself if they will accept His mercy. He proves His righteousness by *punishing* sinners and He proves His love by coming to their help regardless of any suffering that they may inflict upon Him while He is trying to save them.

¶ We believe that God is fully as righteous as the old orthodoxy affirms, and that He is infinitely *more* righteous than its explanation of how His righteousness behaves would indicate.

We prefer not to explain the great verities of God in such a way as to impeach His character and blind men to the fact that they *must* reap as they have sown.

The great fact is that God reaches us, and that it costs Him pain and death to do so; but the belief that Jesus was "executed" for our sins so that we might escape our own just punishment has done worlds of harm. It is not true.

5. How, Then, Does the Death of Jesus Aid in Our Salvation?

¶ The death of God in Jesus helps to save us, not simply because it stirs our emotions, though it does that, but because God is there present making His supreme revelation of the kind of God He is to men; it helps to save us because it is the culminating revelation in a long ascending series of revelations.

It is the nearest, fullest, and completest approach and the most heart-breakingly tender invitation to sinful man to make friends with Him that God ever gave.

No less complete an exposure and revelation is it of man and the sin which he harbors in his heart.

Nowhere else does the love of God appear so bright and therefore the sin of man so black as at the cross.

At the cross, love and sin met prepared to do their utmost.

There, the pure, loving God and sinful, cruel man put no limits on their self-exposure; and that is why the death plea of the more abundant life of God in Jesus aids so in our salvation.

It is not the blood that saves us, but God at the zenith of His revelation in this death hour; the God in Jesus who loved us while we were nailing Him to the cross; the God in Jesus who loved us while His blood trickled down from the wounds that we made in His hands and His feet; He, and only He, can save.

He saves us by the *personal influence of His life* upon ours; He saves us by causing us to believe in Him and by quickening us to love Him; by arousing us to hate sin and love righteousness; by enabling us to see that all men are made for one another and for God, even as He is the friend of all men.

To save us, God must show us how wise and good He is, in contrast with how foolish and selfish we are, and do it in a way that we can never forget.

He must lead us to repentance, give us the assurance of His forgiveness, and make us more and more like Himself by daily comradeship, by the true friendship carried on between Him and His child.

Nothing less is salvation, and nothing but the revealed life of God can accomplish it.

It is not "moral influence" that saves us but the *undying, persistent, personal power of God.*

¶ God has no plan of salvation except to keep after His children until He wins them.

He adopts every possible means of approach, and uses every type of influence at His command.

His seeking to save is a long and dangerous quest; it involves many rebuffs and many crucifixions.

An absentee God could never reveal Himself to us, nor win our love and allegiance; and an incarnate, comrade God is sure to be much resisted and sometimes crucified; because the race has been blinded and made downright cruel by sin.

¶ "This is eternal life: to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent;" only that much of God can be savingly known as is incarnate.

The incarnate God must do something more than stand up in the form of a man to be looked at; incarnation to that extent alone would be of no value.

He must enter vitally into human relations; He must give and take as a member of society.

Not until we hear Him teach and see Him react to all kinds of treatment in our world do we really know Him.

Self-revelation is no easy matter—even for us.

We begin the process of self-exposure in our simple pleasures and duties; but when we move into the crises of life we stand much more fully revealed.

When a man's relations with others have become intimate and complex; when he has had to show his colors in one phase of life after another; then if he is called on to face death because his ideals are opposed by his neighbors, the stage is all set for his self-exposure to the utmost.

God in Jesus succeeded in making Himself savingly known to His immediate disciples before the crisis of His death; but there were others to whom He seemed in His last days to be only fit to die.

¶ Even the disciples knew Him better and loved Him more after His supreme revelation on the cross. They had a new appreciation of God, and a new appreciation of sin; and were willing to die for Him and His cause if the world had not yet had its fill but demanded more innocent blood.

In most cases, their lives were so demanded, and they surrendered them as a further revelation to men of their Father whom Jesus had so fully revealed to them.

The death of Jesus was the climax in a series of revelations made through the three years of His ministry among men.

God made His supreme revelation when, for love's sake, the more abundant life of God in Jesus submitted to death at the hands of His enemies.

This final mad act stripped all masks from off selfish hearts.

It laid bare, also the heart of God; it showed the depth possible to human depravity, it put into our hands

the key to the mystery of pure, self-sacrificing love through ages past, present, and to come; it illuminated Calvary and made it a mount that is destined to illuminate the world.

At the time of the Crucifixion many did not see any meaning remotely like this in it, but some few did.

Those who did see had the clew to the world's redemption and it made them willing to enter into a league with God to let Him carry on His work through them; it made them willing to die like their Master that God's saving light and love might come in contact with those who despised them and Him. "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church."

¶ Many of the early Christians shed their blood and passed through fire to show the throne and court at Rome what the saving love of God was like.

Like their Master they fought a losing battle until they won out by being faithful unto death.

Wherever the incandescent light that flashed and scintillated on Calvary goes out, the Kingdom of God languishes and disintegrates.

Jesus did not bear *our* cross; He bore his own in order that it might induce us to see and be willing to bear ours.

When the time comes that Christianity is stripped of paganism and the bloody rites that are supposed to appease God; when it grasps the true and universal significance of the cross; when for the love of God and men it is willing to bear the cross in every human rela-

tion; then and only then will Christianity conquer the world.

> Jesus, I my cross have taken,
> All to leave and follow Thee.

¶ This is beautiful to sing, but it is much more beautiful to do.

Only then do we know how the love of God can rejuvenate, re-create, and transform.

Where our freely accepted cross is, there our love is.

Those Christians who live dull, gray, tiresome lives should march with Christ if they want what they say they are languishing to have, something thrilling and uplifting.

¶ I am not contending that all Christians must die or lose their property or suffer some other great distress if they follow their Master.

Things were nothing like as bad as that even in the first century. They are much better now after all these years of enlightenment.

Today, a majority can sometimes be found which is not opposed but on the side of the man who will not break faith with God.

Yet there will still be not a little hostility and discomfort for those who follow their Master faithfully even in our most Christian communities; and for those who push on militantly into the jungles of greed, there must still be stiff persecution and many premature deaths.

¶ It does seem too bad that there have to be so many crosses for those who are simply trying to bring

the people to God, to truth, and to the love of one another.

But if selfish people will have it so, then there is no other way for the Father, incarnate in these loving sons and daughters, but to bear the cross.

Only let Christian teachers be careful that their teaching is clear and sound and ample; that they are making an intelligent appeal to the mind and conscience of our generation; and that they are not dealing in mere platitudes.

If we so live Christ and so preach Christ that men can see Him as He is, He will draw all men unto Himself.

CHAPTER XI

WHY DO WE PRAY?

Does prayer change God's will?

What is acceptable prayer?

Is the reflex influence of prayer its chief value?

Does God pray?

How can we make God seem real when we pray?

¶ We talk to our friends for the purpose of letting them know our thoughts, share our feelings, and grant if they are so disposed our wishes.

Our words never inform God, however, in any of these ways. He knows all our thoughts, all our desires, all our needs before we express them.

If an earthly parent knows that his child is in need of anything, he will supply it if he can without the child's asking; perhaps all the more willingly because he does not greedily ask for, or even know, what he needs.

There are, however, many blessings that can not be received unless they are known and sincerely desired.

Will our Heavenly Father, think you, do less for His children than we willingly do for ours?

¶ A little boy was told to ask God to take care of him first through the night and then go to sleep. After refusing to do so, he was asked for the reason.

"Oh, well," he said, "God will take care of me anyway whether I ask Him to or not."

His mother could not deny the truth of that statement. She knew that a healthy boy was very likely to be well in the morning even if he did not pray at night.

She decided that it was not right to tell a lie to get the child to pray. So she said, "If God is good enough to take care of me whether I ask Him to or not, I think I should be good enough to thank Him for it."

This satisfied the little fellow, and he immediately thanked the Lord for His loving care. For the next few months he did not call his devotion praying, but thanking the Lord.

Though there are many more things to be said about prayer, yet they had better not be said than that we should forget the thought of this child.

¶ The Psalms usually ring the changes on this same idea. I have been astonished over and over again in looking through them to see how largely they are addressed to God, and how uniformly they express adoration or give thanks for His unsolicited kindness.

The authors of the Psalms express their whole soul and show that they are doing it with the deepest consciousness that God is their principal hearer.

They seem unable to discourse long on any theme without addressing their words directly to the Lord.

Whether they speak of their sins, their hopes, their love, their aspirations, or their achievements, it is with a sense of gratitude to God.

They do not ask God to forgive their sins as often as they confess that He is more willing to forgive than they are to repent.

Whatever they talk over with the Lord they usually do it in this most admirable way.

¶ After spending an hour with these worshipful souls, pondering upon the matter and the manner of their way of communing with God, the change experienced in turning to read many of our Christian prayers with the same close study is like a cold plunge into icy water.

The majority of our written prayers should be revised or, better still, thrown away.

Eliminate the objectionable from them, and there is not enough left to form the nucleus of a worthy prayer.

It can truthfully be said of *some* of our prayers that nothing finer has ever been written.

Likewise, this same criticism and this same eulogy can be truthfully said over many of our prayers that are not written.

Many of both kinds help me, and many of them trample on my faith, irritate my thoughts, and chill my love.

Well might we repeat the request of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray?" We are always speaking about the simple gospel and simple prayers, and yet, no matter how simply one preaches or prays, his own underlying

ideas will crop out. And if they are not sound as often happens, they are offensive.

1. Does Prayer Change God's Will?

¶ As we have said, our prayers convey no new information to the Lord, neither do they make Him any more kind, or willing to help us.

God desires our good whether we pray or not, beyond all that we can understand or wish.

Nothing we can do ever changes Him either *from* the right or *to* the right because His will always sides with the very best thing to do under the existing circumstances.

The right thing to do for a child, however, depends upon the conduct and mental attitude of the child.

In goodness, God is the changeless Father, we are the vacillating children.

God's constant good will compels him to suit His actions to our variations. As certain, therefore, as God is good and wise, we determine His specific acts toward us by our conduct in each new situation.

In a deep sense every life, good or bad, is a prayer; it has many surface desires, but underneath them all is the great organizing and controlling desire.

This deepest desire expressed in deeds if not in words is the soul's real prayer.

With this deepest desire, the real prayer that we are praying, our spoken petitions may not be at all in harmony.

Prayer is not Christian until every desire of the heart is brought before God for His approval or disapproval, His condemnation or benediction.

Our Father regards our deepest desire and disregards the vagrant wishes and petitions that we present to Him.

It is when the soul stands before its Maker making a solemn engagement to surrender every desire to His will, that it is blessed beyond its heart's desire whether the particular request of the moment is granted or denied. ¶ Prayer on this basis opens to God a chance to do for us that which He never could do if we did not come to Him with the honest surrender of our whole hearts.

Nothing could be more stupid and wrong than for God to treat us in the same way regardless of the real attitude of our lives toward Him, our own highest good, and that of our fellow-men.

Yet someone is always telling me that "we" cannot influence the actions of God.

As if God were so automatically fixed that He must treat a man just the same whether the man is dispensing charity or robbing the people; whether he is a wise man or a fool; whether a saint or a sinner.

Those who coax and plead, as if they were trying to persuade God against His will, may be largely responsible for the idea that God is not influenced by prayer.

Such coaxing and pleading as we sometimes hear is a pitiful, not to say, a dreadful thing.

Jesus rebuked it by saying, "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things before ye ask Him."

And, "Your Father is more willing to give good gifts to His children than men are to give good gifts to their children."

¶ This is not meant to imply that we should never go before God in agony of spirit.

There are times and circumstances that allow us no choice, if we are to pray at all, but to take souls of anguish to God in prayer.

If ever it is right to come before God, surely it is right to come when we are in great distress.

But there is a proper way of agonizing in His presence.

At such times it is very proper to ask, Is there any other way, Father? Have I overlooked anything that I could do to avert this impending calamity? Have I fallen short in anything that I could do or be? If not, if this is Thy will, then let it be even so; but give me strength.

So prayed our Master in the agony of the Garden, but He never dashed any cup from His lips that His Father wished Him to drink; nor did He ever fail to receive the strength necessary for these ordeals.

Such prayer has saved the day for many of us in many a crisis; and whatever the issue, the net result of our prayer has greatly blessed us and the world.

¶ Our prayers can not make God any more kind and willing, but they may make us more willing to be led and thus enable Him to do for us and with us that which He could not do if we did not pray.

In this sense, and only in this sense, can our prayers change God's will and actions.

The prayers of the Apostle Paul lifted him above his selfishness and self-assertiveness and enabled God to do many things in him and through him which He never could have done without Paul's great surrender.

If he had not prayed, God could not have used him to reach the world through his great missionary tours; and, in that event, it is hard to see how the Christian Church would ever have got its world start.

2. What Is Acceptable Prayer?

¶ It is the honest give and take between two comrades; the complete exchange of lives through fellowship; sincere conversation with God.

It is keeping step with God as we journey along and talking to Him by the way.

When one selfishly or cravenly remains silent on any guilty thought or motive, in his conversation with God, he ceases to pray, no matter how many prayers he may recite.

Prayer, therefore, is the greatest act of the soul.

One may think, or talk, or work with a more or less dormant conscience; but in true prayer, conscience, mind, and will must be acutely alive.

Prayer exposes the entire life to the searching eyes of God; it makes us see how our lives look through God's eyes.

It is astonishing how keen our moral sense becomes when we say, "How does this thing in my life appear to you, dear Father?"

The first question to ask ourselves when we are about to pray should be, Am I going to be honest?

If we thus bare our hearts to God, we pray whether we use our lips or not.

Two people equally given to sincere prayer, will not be equally inclined to express it in audible words, yet it would be very strange to find anyone, whose heart communed much with God, who never cared to express himself to God in spoken words.

¶ Must acceptable prayer be offered in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake?

No Christian worthy of the name has the least disposition to deny Jesus one iota of His due.

He is glad to acknowledge that but for the light and influence of Christ's life, he would not know so well how to pray; nor have such a strong desire to pray.

He gives great thanks for the help that comes through the human approach of God to him in Jesus. As Christians, we all come to the God who bears the name Jesus and Emmanuel.

But to think that God will not answer our Christ-taught prayers unless Jesus intercedes for us, as an advocate before a judge, is almost blasphemous.

If God had not aggressively sought us in Jesus, He would not receive us because of anything that Jesus might say on our behalf.

When a person comes to God in all sincerity, he is loved and accepted before Jesus has time to say a word in his favor.

It is highly desirable that a Christian should remember how much it has cost the Father and our Elder Brother to reach him and to save him from his blindness and selfishness; and it is equally good that a Christian express his gratitude that God was not driven away by all the unmerited suffering that his stubbornness and the stubbornness of the race have caused Him.

¶ Is *faith* necessary to acceptable prayer?

Certainly. We must believe that God is on the "square" with us or else there is no sense in praying or having anything to do with Him.

I should never pray to a God of whom I was suspicious.

Never once in my life have I had the slightest doubt concerning the goodness and fairness of God.

I have, sad to say, doubted His existence, but never His character if He existed.

To satisfy my mind that God existed, required a long and hard struggle. Of this I have written in my book, "What and Where Is God?"

With this question settled, I can no more doubt His dependableness than I can doubt that two and two are four.

I have no capacity to understand anyone who believes in God but questions His goodness, or fairness, or reliability.

¶ Must we believe that God will grant the particular thing for which we pray?

If I am praying for the forgiveness of my sins, I

have absolute confidence that He will forgive me if I repent and, by His help, stop sinning; and equally confident of His presence and help.

In regard to other things, I am never certain.

My assurance goes only this far: that He will grant my particular request if His wisdom approves; and if He cannot, it is preferable for me that He should not.

The desired outcome for anything that rests heavily on my mind, I must consider with Him long and carefully; and frequently it comes to pass for me because I do.

Regardless, however, of after results, I must take all my deepest concerns to Him because I need light and help where my burden is heaviest and my interest is deepest.

When I go to God with my whole heart, light and help always come even if my desire cannot be fulfilled.

It is not true that if one has great faith he can get anything.

If it were, only one person would need to have such faith; he could believe that God would inspire all others to believe also, and they would.

Nothing of that sort has happened; though Jesus wished all men to believe in God, and His faith was as perfect as faith could be.

There were many things that His faith, even, could not secure.

There are many things that God can not do.

¶ There are three distinct types of prayer that I have long observed.

These I will illustrate by a parable: A father had three sons. The first came and said, "Father, will you give me a responsible position in your business?"

The father said, "Not now, my son, it is impossible."

Now the son did not much expect that his request would be granted, and was not certain that he cared to bear the responsibility involved in filling the position. So he went his way for that time and came to his father less and less frequently thereafter because he had smaller expectations of a favorable reply.

Then came the second son to his father and said, "Father, will you make me the purchasing agent in your firm?"

The father, knowing that the indolent and careless disposition of his son unfitted him for the place, informed him that it would be impossible to grant his request.

This son did not go away like the former, but idled about, living on his father's bounty, and continued to annoy his father by teasing for favors that he could not grant. He was not only a discredit to his father, but he did all he could to make himself a burden and a nuisance to him all his life.

¶ Finally the third son came with his request for himself, which was also refused. Unlike his brothers he neither went away, nor teased for what he could not have. He said, "Father, I do not want anything that your wisdom and love cannot grant; but this matter is of such great

importance in my judgment to me that I should like to talk it over with you to see if something can not be done; perhaps a way may be found by which I can meet the conditions that would make it right for me to have my chance."

Now the father was greatly pleased to have such a son; a son that was willing to be trained to adjust himself to all the facts in the case. So they conversed together frequently and confidentially; they entered deeply into each other's plans and purposes; they became bosom companions.

¶ Now it so happened that their frequent spells of communion not only gave them both much pleasure, but the son began to see the whole matter in a new light and to govern himself accordingly, so that in an incredibly short time the father was happy to grant his son's request. Passers-by then saw a new sign over the front door which read: A. B. Mansell & Son.

¶ His petition and the way that the first son acted about it represents a type of prayer that is all too common. It is a wretchedly poor type, and usually ends by prayer losing its hold on the man altogether.

It is not really prayer at all; but a cheap gamble in foolish, selfish requests.

The second son represents another type of prayer that is not as uncommon as some may suppose. Hosts of people rarely pray except to coax and tease God for something.

Such persons grow more selfish the longer they pray.

They are religious spongers and dead-beats. They are always wanting something that they are not fit to receive, and have little use for God except when He makes them happy for another hour or two, or gives them some new goody.

Those who pray thus do sometimes work themselves up into a psychic auto-intoxication in which they imagine that God has blessed them; but when their emotional spree is past, their false ecstasy goes and leaves them either despondent or ready for a new venture in sin.

These are they who neither learn God's mind nor advance His Kingdom in the world.

¶ The third son represents true prayer. He got what he wanted because he went after it in the right way.

If his request had never been granted, nevertheless, both he and his father would have been satisfied and blessed in the end by working out the problem it raised together.

Even if the son had not been prepared for what he wanted by his talks with his father, those talks would have better fitted him for something else; and something, perhaps of more value at that.

Fortunate is he who has learned to pray in a way that is right and pleasing to God.

Many times this parable has been literally fulfilled in human homes: One son is a rover, another a sponger, while one is a bosom friend and business partner of his father.

Likewise, this parable is literally fulfilled many times

in God's family. Some of His sons are wanderers, some are spongers, and many are the others who are with Him in business. If we think of Africa, two names, God and Livingstone, are before the mind's eye. If of America, God and Washington. In Palestine, it was God and Jesus. And so on indefinitely, it has been, through all our wonderful human history.

All the great institutions, the world over, bear the names of God and His noble sons and daughters who have communed with Him and worked with Him. "Prayer can accomplish more things than we have ever dreamed of."

3. Is the Reflex Influence of Prayer Its Chief Value?

On the contrary, it is the smallest part of its value.

The benefit of expressing ourselves to Him would not amount to much if God did not give us something big to express.

An empty soul has little to say that is worth saying.

A deep desire to pray acts as a magnet to draw the great thoughts of God to our innermost consciousness.

In honest, heartfelt prayer, God takes a part in the process as well as in the reply.

Sometimes it is said that prayer does not move God, that it only moves the one who prays; that a man does not pull the wharf to his boat, but his boat to the wharf. God is not a wharf, but a kind friend on the wharf.

Once we really show Him that we want to land He

pulls harder than we do. He throws out the line to us and, if we hold fast, does His full share of the pulling that gets us to shore.

When a person consciously faces God in a resolve to be absolutely honest with God and himself, it is remarkable what unprecedented things happen.

It is wonder-working to face God without even trying to formulate a prayer; to stand with His conscious gaze for a few moments upon your soul.

If one does that for even a brief time, his soul will involuntarily say something to God; and what it says will almost certainly be the proper thing.

What it says will be prayer indeed.

¶ I can easily think of a person working himself up into a feverish state by the mere friction of his own importunities to God, but that is something very different from letting God look into your soul until the dead silence is broken by the soul's sudden live cry to God. That is letting Him help us to pray.

If God has no part in our prayers, we do not pray; we simply rattle on with no great profit to ourselves and little pleasure to Him.

I do believe that the pulpit is remiss in not teaching the people more about prayer.

That the average person but very poorly knows how to pray is evident. Though some stumble upon the truth about it, how much better it would be if all were wisely guided.

Many of us ministers do not know how to pray as we

should, and clearly reveal that fact, every time we undertake to lead our congregations in devotion. I believe we would all agree that here is where we need much toning up.

¶ If prayer meant no more than the working of ourselves up to our best frame of mind, it would still be worth the effort; but since this tuning up of the soul turns it into a receiving station for personal messages from the mind and heart of God, its value becomes incalculable.

True prayer seeks admittance into the company of God first of all as the supreme privilege, well knowing that in the very possession of God Himself all other things necessary will be cared for.

It is a sad sight to see one seeking temporal gifts from God at long range before He is willing to extend the hospitality of a contrite heart to God Himself.

We may always get what we want—if what we want is God.

And nothing else that we may desire is to be compared with that for complete satisfaction.

It is one thing to show off your gifts of speech in the presence of a friend, but quite another and better thing to use them to learn the mind and win the love of the one with whom you converse.

Compare for a moment the reflex benefits of your prayer with the benefits of the incoming light and urge of God in your soul. If one becomes aware of the thoughts of God, instantly they become his own thoughts; if he comes to realize the love of God, immediately it

becomes the love of his own heart; if God reveals in anything His plan and purpose, at once that plan and purpose become his own. So great is the value of prayer!

If prayer does not secure these things, then prayer is impossible for the intelligent; it becomes but a relic of superstition.

¶ If a person through prayer lives in God and lets God live in him, if he talks to God about everything that seriously affects them both, if he communes with him as a true friend (and not as some great Moloch who wants fire and human sacrifice) then through his prayer he is supremely blessed.

The Christian is living below his privileges who has not so learned to pray; to consider all his wants before God; to abide in the light and love of the Father until they are granted or until it is apparent that they should not be granted.

Paul prayed three times that his infirmity might be removed; but when God revealed to him that his strength should be "made perfect in weakness" he accepted it and made it a reason for rejoicing.

When one takes a great affliction, as many Christians besides Paul have done, and surmounts it with the ease apparently of the eagle above the mountain crag, then he is peculiarly blessed as a reward, and his victory and reward astonish and bless the world.

Florence Nightingale, afflicted in body, rose above her affliction to God and to the love of suffering humanity. She brought back a wave of light from God that caused

men to fill the earth with kindly hospitals. To keep up her devotion to the sick she got something from Him that she could pour out upon the world.

God is the source of all blessings, spiritual and temporal, and prayer is the open road to God and whatever bounties His love sees fit to bestow.

Our Father will do the best He can for us even if we turn our backs upon Him; but He can do much more in every way for us if we face Him.

Some will say, "Of course all that must be true if there is a God, but I am not certain that there is any." Well, if there is no God, may God have mercy on us.

4. Does God Pray?

¶ Yes. He prays more than all the rest of us put together.

He is forever beseeching us. He knocks in warning or approbation at the door of conscience; speaks to us in the pleas of parents, teachers, books and in nature; calls to us to listen to Him in wind and wave; whispers a greeting to us in the rustling leaves and blooming flowers; bends over us assuringly in His rainbow arch, and drops refreshment upon us in His showers.

He speaks in lightning flash and thunder crash, reminding us of His infinite power; startles us by earthquake and cyclone to shake us out of the thought of our self-sufficiency; smiles upon us in waves of prosperity and frowns through the billows of widespread poverty and depression. He makes His appeal through tranquil

homes and peaceful hamlets, and thunders in riots, in all lawlessness, and in the crash of falling empires. He warns us by the moral wreckage of human lives that fall by the way.

He stands with outstretched arms ever repeating, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

¶ Yes, God prays, He implores, and when we are willing He communes.

Though he can not recognize us as His equals, yet He can and does most generously reverence us as sons. We pray as children. He prays as the Great Father.

Formerly, I was greatly concerned as to whether God would answer my prayers.

Now, my whole concern is as to whether I will answer His prayers; for He cannot answer mine unless His are answered by me.

If I go His way, He must go my way.

Together we may travel over many beautiful and useful roads that neither of us could travel alone.

God and His child need one another. "Come with Me and I will do thee good," is the silent voice of God that ever falls upon my inner ear as gently as the autumn leaves fall upon the ground.

It must be the Father's voice, for it is like no other. It is silent as gravity, illuminating as the sun, sweet as the fragrance of flowers, refreshing as rain, strengthening as food, comforting as a mother's love. It is the Father's gentle, patient voice in supplication to me.

What shall I do with God's prayer?

Answer, "Yes, Father, I come"? Or close my ears and harden my heart?

¶ Once I prayed, *my* will be done; and felt grieved if it were not.

Now I pray that my will may be done if it is His will.

If my will is not done I know who, if anybody, is to blame.

Moreover, when the Christian's will and God's will are identical, their conjoint prayers are not always answered.

Sometimes, yes often, they fail because those to whom they are addressed turn a deaf ear.

The saddest and most appalling thing I know is for the Lord of all being to bend in supplication before one of His children and have His request flatly refused.

And this is done every day and by many who are not unbelievers, for they acknowledge that God has begged them to do something for Him and that they have turned Him down.

No thought has ever come to me that has sobered and steadied me more; or that has hushed me into a deeper silence before God than this: Am I willing to answer God's prayers? Am I willing to do what He asks me to do, and to be what He would help me to be?

Is there any use of my praying to Him if He cannot successfully pray to me?

It is easy to believe that if I answer His prayer, He will answer mine.

How could I better fulfill all the conditions necessary for the answering of my own prayers than to answer God's prayers to me whole-heartedly?

¶ Sometimes I do not know what God wishes me to do; yet ninety-nine times out of a hundred it is perfectly plain.

What God wishes of any of us is for the most part very simple.

For example: when I get awake in the morning, He wishes me to recognize Him with love and gratitude. This I do hundreds of mornings in these words:

> Come my soul, thou must be waking,
> Now is breaking
> O'er the earth another day.
> Come to Him who made this splendor,
> See thou render
> All thy feeble strength can pay.

¶ When I do this or something like it, on first waking, I am perfectly certain that I have done that which is pleasing to Him and profitable to me.

What next does He wish?

If it is time for me to get up, that is what He wants me to do. Did you ever try getting out of bed to please God? It is delightful!

Then what does God want us to do?

Sometimes feeling rather lazy or hurried I have been tempted to neglect my morning bath; but remembering that God would have me take it, I have proceeded to do

it and it has been followed by a spiritual blessing almost as great as when I was baptized.

In most things His will is very plain.

Unless there is some valid reason why I should not, He wants me to be at breakfast on time. He wishes me to say grace and to be grateful for all His kindness. He wishes me to eat my breakfast like a Christian gentleman, and not as an old grouch who makes the entire family miserable.

So I might go on through the entire day and point out what every one knows to be the will of God when He thinks of it.

¶ I find many people who always seem to be undergoing religious pains because they cannot discover God's will. At one time I was a little like that myself; but some years ago it popped into my mind, Why, I nearly always know God's will. Why seek God's will when I know it?

Take your stand in His will and walk in it. That is to have constant fellowship with God. Your journey to office or store becomes a walk with your Heavenly Father and the atmosphere that you use to do it with becomes "The clear, dear breath of God who loveth us."

¶ Now those who cheerfully take their stand in God's will, that they know so well, are the most likely people in the world to find out to their complete satisfaction what His will is in any more difficult and baffling problem that only now and then arises.

¶ There now comes to my mind one of the greatest

problems that I ever had to meet. It rested so heavily on my heart that I lay awake with it before God until four o'clock in the morning.

Though burdened in spirit, I did not plead and fret.

Having already canvassed the subject to the last degree possible, I weighed the pros and cons over and over again, but the scales would not tip.

Again and again I examined my preference in the matter to see if it were selfish. At last I could truthfully say that I wanted nothing but God's wisdom to determine the decision.

That I was not competent to decide the question I fully realized, and frankly told the Lord that there was nothing now to depend upon but the impulse that He might awaken in my soul. The case was rested.

After some time of waiting, the desired conviction to act came, and that settled it.

Now several years after, I can clearly see that if I had decided differently, it would have been the greatest mistake of my life; also that even if I had chanced to make the same decision without prayer, my decision would probably have been a fatal one.

The struggle in prayer made the decision a holy matter, and it made me holier to meet the strain which the decision involved.

5. How Can We Make God Seem Real When We Pray?

¶ Naturally, I can answer this question only for myself.

Every one who prays must have some idea of God as an object or being to whom he comes when he prays.

His ideas in regard to God in the course of time may change, and the change may be to the great advantage of the worshiper, but for the time being he must pray to God in the likeness that he has formed of Him; unless he prays, as we sometimes unfortunately do, without thinking of God at all.

I have been much mortified at times by realizing that I had "repeated" the Lord's Prayer without even thinking of God.

A minister may say over his sermon in the study without having any one in his mind to whom he is saying it.

Sometimes I hear sermons from the pulpit that do not seem to be addressed to any one.

So far as I can detect, they are only memory exercises; sometimes, worse than that, they are a painful effort to think of something definite to say that should have been thought of before coming to the pulpit. Such prayers and such sermons would better be omitted.

¶ As I have grown older my first act in prayer, private or public, is to turn consciously to God, to look at Him with my whole soul; to open my heart to His holy gaze.

It is better to do this without a word being said than to speak the most fitting words without realizing His presence.

Prayer is hardly real unless we are as conscious of God as we are of what we are saying. Just as preaching is not preaching unless the minister is as conscious of

his people as he is of his sermon; conscious that he is trying to speak to the very heart of them.

Therefore in real prayer, we endeavor to come face to face with Him to whom we pray. This is a most helpful thing to do even if we think of nothing to say. Yet if one remains for awhile with his whole heart open to God, it is morally certain that confessions will be made and that words of adoration will be spoken.

¶ Last summer during three weeks of my vacation in the country, I walked three-quarters of a mile to the post office every night after dark.

On most of those evenings I resolved to keep conscious company with God throughout the entire journey. I told the Lord that I would endeavor to let nothing take from me the sense of His presence.

Yes, I said many things to Him during those evening walks; yet what I said was purely incidental, even if it did prove to be unusually vital.

As I thought of my unseen soul making my feet move, so I thought of His unseen soul making the whirling atoms associate together in all the objects about me; in the trees, in the great ledges of rock by the way, in the road under my feet, in the water of the ocean that was half veiled by the night; I thought of how He was directing electrons and atoms and molecules to paint the evening glow of the western sky.

Every once in a while I said something to Him about what He was doing, and told Him how I adored Him.

Then I thought of how lovely He made human faces,

how kindly human hands were, how melodious human voices.

As my memory recalled faces that I had seen all aglow with His truth and love, my Companion of the way became intensely human.

I could feel His touch in the hands of my mother as she buried my hand in hers while I said my evening prayers as a child.

Naturally my mind recalled the face of Jesus, the portraits of Him by the artists, the descriptions of Him in the Gospels, the words that fell from His lips; and in the course of it all, my Companion, The World Builder, became like Jesus.

The One who was working all about me, above me, and within me had once smiled through the face and spoken through the lips of Him whom I delight to call Teacher and Master.

I realized that whenever God was granted the use of human lips, He spoke like Jesus and loved like Him.

Holding the image of that face before my mind as the best expression of God, I recited a hymn that I had written. I said those words to Him, two or three times over, trying to see each time if I might make them a little more real and direct:

O Christ, I come to Thee
Thy heart of God to see,
My own dear Lord!
That I may ever be
In all things more like Thee,
From ev'ry sin set free,
Speak Thou the word.

When I behold Thy face,
My heart then feels God's grace,
My truest friend!
Since Thou art all to me,
Myself I give to Thee
With all that I can be;
Years without end.

Yes, closer still I come,
For in Thy heart is room,
Thou blessed Son!
Now I may live in Thee
As Thou dost dwell in me;
Since by Thy light I see
That we are one.

Still may our spirits blend
To make me truest friend
Of all mankind.
Then I shall love God's will
And His deep joy fulfill,
Removing human ill
With Christlike mind.

¶ As I walked that country road, I could feel that God was laying the path for my feet, painting the evening sky for my eyes, and making the stars twinkle above me as He had smiled through the face of Jesus.

God was expressing Himself in everything from electrons to human faces. He became as real as the universe that enfolded me. And the universe was real and lovely because He willed the universe and its beauty.

Though everything about this walk was very natural and simple, yet it was inexpressibly grand. I had given

Him my attention long enough for Him to make Himself very dear to me and to photograph His image on my soul.

Then I spoke to Him of my life, of my sins, great and small, and I felt the wounds in my soul. Howbeit, though the scars were there to give me warning and to make me ashamed, yet the wounds were healed.

Then I thanked God with my whole heart, and told Him that I should like to walk to the post office with Him the next night.

¶ As for myself, I am too careless, I do not live the life I should, yet I know how to make God real.

And when I am wise enough to walk with Him over harder roads than that to the post office; and good enough to walk with Him in pleasure, in business, and in the valley of death, then He will be "closer to me than breathing and nearer than hands and feet."

CHAPTER XII

FOR WHAT DO WE LIVE?

Is the "pursuit of happiness" the true aim of life?

Is righteousness the goal of life?

What, then, is the highest aim of life?

Shall we reach the goal?

Is the goal of life worth the cost of the journey?

¶ "If you ate less, you would not be so fleshy and your work would be less taxing." Thus remarked President Eliot to his hired man who was puffing and perspiring over a bit of shoveling.

The man worked on in silence for a few moments and then said, "What gives a feller more pleasure than eat'n?"

¶ As to what gives the most pleasure in life there is great diversity of opinion; but there is a widespread belief that "the pursuit of happiness" is the chief aim.

In respectable prudential circles we are instructed, even exhorted, to be discriminating and far-seeing in our

search for happiness; to look beyond the passing hour to the whole course of life.

Sometimes we are admonished to give a place in our calculations to our felicity in the life to come.

Emphasis is often laid upon the fact that our happiness is involved in the happiness of others and that we should, therefore, take that into account.

A life of service is sometimes recommended on the ground that it is the best means of finding our own greatest satisfaction.

¶ Frequently religion is "sold" to these happiness chasers as the source of material prosperity, the ground of spiritual delights, and as a guarantee against the unhappiness of future punishment.

Work, intelligence, character, and more or less self-denial, we are told by them, are the recognized price that must be paid for the rewarding and luxurious ease of the finest happiness.

When this life is over, if we have been good here, there will be nothing but happiness for us; in our future lot, God will have the pleasure of being adored and sung to and we shall have the privilege of enjoying Him forever.

Religion, therefore is worth any man's while as a means of making him happy and more happy until all ends in bliss.

A secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association told me that he should stop praying when he got to Heaven and spend eternity in praising God.

It did not occur to him that God might get tired of unceasing praise and tell him to stop that singing if he loved Him and go to work.

¶ Regardless of where the above instruction begins it usually ends in the same place: Love will make us and others happy; therefore we should cultivate love.

To keep the laws of health and the laws of society will make us strong and safe; hence we should keep the laws and enjoy health and security.

Because respectability multiplies our comforts and privileges and increases happiness, we should carefully cultivate respectability.

¶ As a matter of fact, not a little of what has now been said is true; but it is far from being the whole truth.

The whole truth puts its foot down hard on this doctrine that makes happiness the supreme thing and everything else but a means to that end.

According to this philosophy, we can buy and sell God, religion, and character just as we can buy and sell commodities; for the happiness they will bring.

Hence the religion that offers the most pleasure and prosperity will win the most popular success if it can fulfill its promises promptly.

As a matter of observation, however, the religion of loaves, fishes, and rapturous moods does not last very long with the average person who tries it; he can find greater thrills in other ways, and may be able to win more loaves and fishes by a calculating shrewdness.

Some people, however, are able to follow a religion of mere happy moods to the end; and and it makes little difference to them what the religion itself is like or by what method it produces the happy states as long as it succeeds.

The Hindu ascetic is happy, and completely satisfied with his filthy method of obtaining the coma he calls peace.

¶ There are a good many sects, Christian and non-Christian, that make spiritual intoxication the supreme end of life.

They run to different types of ecstasy, and realize their artificial inward glow by different methods and the use of different sets of ideas, but the end sought in them all is the same—happiness.

When they have found something that "happifies" them, they think nothing more is to be said; they have reached the highest good.

An old man once stood up in a revival meeting and testified: "O brethren, I feel—I feel, I can't tell how I feel; but oh! I feel—I feel!" No one knows but that he may have felt all right; he may have felt like giving a thousand dollars to missions, or like suffering for some good cause. Or he may have realized that he had a very unusual feeling which he simply enjoyed.

¶ With no higher aim than the pursuit of a selfish happiness, everything is experimented with today from eating and drinking to the most abstruse philosophy; from

laziness to the most strenuous activity; from slovenliness to the most fastidious refinement; from wickedness to religion.

1. Is the Pursuit of Happiness the True Aim of Life?

¶ By word and deed, multitudes of people avow that they honestly think so.

The self-respecting among them would resent the thought that it includes the coarser pleasures, but would not hesitate to affirm that intellectual and spiritual happiness is the supreme goal to be sought by us all.

The foolish and the wicked are foolish and wicked because they accept the lower pleasures, and sacrifice the higher and more enduring.

The wise and the good are wise and good because they forego all such lower pleasures as would prevent them from obtaining the higher.

According to this view, we work, we love, we obey conscience, we worship God—if it is thought necessary—for the prize of more happiness in this life and, possibly, endless happiness in the life to come.

Some struggle on through this life and endure hardships with no higher hope than that of finding a place at last where there will be no more tears, no sighs, no pain; but felicity and unruffled bliss forever.

¶ We do not deny that happiness is beautiful and sacred.

God himself must be reasonably happy, even under existing circumstances, and He wishes us to be happy.

To desire a life of cheer and deep satisfaction for ourselves and others is neither a sin nor a weakness; but a virtue.

The true goal of life offers more happiness than we have ever dreamed of, and more than we are yet able to comprehend.

But the great *insanity* of singling out happiness and making it the end of all things, is what Carlyle satirized as the "pig philosophy." Pigs seek happiness from morning till night and the porkbarrel is their fate.

To set up happiness—of any kind—as the supreme end, is to obscure the meaning of life itself and thereby work great injury.

¶ Especially does this concentration on the quest of happiness exert a baneful influence upon the young, the thoughtless, and the weak.

The average person imbued with this idea of what life *is for* reasons thus: Since all are seeking the same end, their own greatest happiness, my aim shall be the same as theirs. Opinions differ as to what gives the greatest enjoyment. If I do not get happiness now I may never get it.

So, whenever pleasures in hand do not continue to give me satisfaction, I will try for more satisfying forms of gratification in other directions; possibly I may become religious. Or, it may be that I can enjoy the questionable pleasures of this life and, by repenting when they are over for me, secure bliss in the life to come.

To many that would seem an ideal program; it would

look to them like getting a double portion of happiness for themselves.

¶ None of this is meant to imply that God does not wish us to get all the happiness that is good for us—and that is no small amount.

God intended that we should get much pleasure, from the normal use of our five senses all the way up to the highest use of our intellectual and spiritual faculties.

A good appetite and wholesome food, and all other legitimate pleasures, afford as great satisfaction to a saint as to a sinner; in the long run, much more.

It would be a calamity if the necessary feeding of our human furnace, the body, gave us no more delight than feeding the coal furnace which heats our homes.

It is said of the early Christians that "They took their food with gladness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."

The partaking of a meal with friends, when gratitude to God and good Christian fellowship abound, becomes almost a sacrament.

The physical pleasure, blending with the social delight, takes nothing from the fine quality of either, but adds something to both.

The exuberance of spirits that comes from a strong and healthy body makes a contribution of efficiency and zest to everything we do. We can work, or love, or pray better if we have physical buoyancy to do it on.

¶ As animal life takes the mineral and vegetable elements up into itself and puts its own vitality into them

so the spiritual life lifts the physical and intellectual up into itself and puts its divinity into them.

If there were no delight to be had in life, life would be unbearable for both God and man.

Happiness is not something to be despised, but cause for profound gratitude to God.

It will not do, however, if we are to get even the maximum of happiness, to make a search for it the supreme aim of life.

The possession of children constitutes a very great enjoyment, but a child is of much more importance than any amount of enjoyment his parents take in him.

With a broken heart, noble mothers have been known to give up their babies because they could not do the right thing by them. Less noble mothers under like circumstances, have kept their children to their great injury because they were not willing to forego the pleasure of having their children with them.

¶ No kind of happiness can be made the supreme goal because none is sufficiently inclusive; they all overlook too many things; they are too subjective; they all, when directly sought, smack too much of selfishness—and besides, the highest good involves no small measure of suffering.

Jesus said of Paul, "I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake."

And Paul said, "We also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness; and steadfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope; and

hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts."

A few verses later, Paul again said: "But we also rejoice in God."

Anyone who studies the life of Paul, will see that the apostle was not happy over his happiness but because he was reconciled to God and was walking in newness of life; because he was pressing toward the glorious mark of a high calling.

Sorrow and joy both awaited him, but he was no more thinking of them than a self-respecting man is always thinking of his pay while he works.

2. Is Righteousness the Goal of Life?

¶ Righteousness is a much more worthy thought to dwell upon and object to aim at than happiness.

When I can not be both, I would rather be right than comfortable.

When my now sainted wife used to criticise me, I often remarked, "It hurts, but go on; I want to know the truth."

Righteousness of heart, as Jesus conceived of it, brings us wonderfully near to the heart of God and to the hearts of our fellowmen; and causes us to undertake a thousand things we never should even think of, let alone do, without it.

Yet the appreciation of these splendid new things to do, and the effort to do them cause us to forget all about our righteousness.

When we have plenty of strength, or plenty of righteousness, we forget it in our enthusiastic absorption in what we are doing; just as we forget our eyes in the interesting page before them.

The fact that sound and healthy righteousness forgets itself in its tasks, is sufficient proof that it is not the supreme aim of life.

We are not good unless we are good for something.

¶ God's goodness, no more than ours, begins and ends in itself; He is not thinking all the time of how good He is, but of the good He is trying to accomplish.

When either our strength or our goodness begins to fail us, then we become very self-conscious over it.

We are warranted in believing that the all-righteous God "looks up and not down, out and not in, and lends a hand."

He does not spend his time in contemplating His perfect attributes, but in responding to the urge to do something worthy and worth while with them.

The same would be true of us if we had God's kind of righteousness in abundance; but since we have not, it is one of the great and noble ends to be sought.

If we all were like God in holiness, then we would become fascinated with the real business of life as God sees it and intends it to be; and we should find higher and higher objectives to compass.

The man who "seeks righteousness first" is in every way superior to the one who seeks happiness first.

He is nobler, more sensible, more substantial; he is

developing that divine thing called personality, he is making himself more useful, he is putting the horse before the cart, he is facing in the right direction; that is, if his righteousness is of the right quality, if it is the righteousness that "exceeds that of the scribe and Pharisee."

¶ Much that is called righteousness but little resembles the goodness of God; it is narrow and covers too little; or it may be too exacting and demand its pound of flesh, an eye for an eye, its tooth for a tooth; or it may be largely taboo, or conformity to stupid rites and ceremonies.

Unless our "righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees," we shall never comprehend the Kingdom that Jesus was speaking about. The righteousness of God contains love and vision; in fact, it contains everything that goes to make up a glad, strong, and brotherly life. And such a life, even if it were God's, can not stand alone; for grand as it appears when we isolate it in our thought it does not complete the picture of life.

Unless we see what holiness is for, we do not even know what holiness is.

Unless there is something to be righteous about, there is no righteousness.

3. What, Then, Is the Highest Aim of Life?

¶ It must be something definite and easy to visualize. It must include all good; it must be the highest aim for God, as well as for man; it must be the *one thing* for which *God, man, and God's universe exist.*

¶ Is there anything of which it can be truthfully said: This, and this only, is the supreme end of all being?

There is. It can be expressed in three words. *One Perfect Family.* Or, the same thing may be put in four words: *The Kingdom of God.*

¶ *The kingdom of God is one perfect family of which God is the Father, all people are the children, and the universe is both their home and their workshop.*

¶ A heavenly Father, loving brothers and sisters, a beautiful home, ingenious instruments, all these to be devoutly appreciated and guarded with religious care: The idea is so simple that a child can comprehend its meaning and feel its appeal, and yet so rich in possibilities that none but God can fathom its depths.

¶ It covers all that God is, all that is latent in His children, and every good use to which the universe can be turned. It includes all intelligence, all duty, all love, all righteousness, all happiness, all power; in short, it contains all reality. There can not possibly be anything above it, beneath it, nor beyond it. No good thing in this universe, subjective or objective, spiritual or material, is left out.

The perfect family of God can not be realized unless we avail ourselves of all the fullness of God's life; it can never be realized while we are indifferent to God and our brothers, or while we misuse the forces constituting the home and the instruments which God has put into our hands; it cannot be realized unless we clearly see

the goal and earnestly strive for it by the help of God and the help of one another.

And if it can never be realized, then God has nothing left for which to live; he has failed to realize His purpose, and our fate will be to perish.

¶ Everything that Jesus taught was set forth in the light of "The Kingdom."

God, man, righteousness, love, eternal life, and everything which Jesus discoursed upon, got its meaning from this supreme message of the kingdom of God; and apart from it, not one thing in this universe could be appraised at its true meaning and value.

This beautiful and all-inclusive idea of the kingdom was the "good news" that Jesus proclaimed. It was the grain of mustard seed that He said would grow into a tree. The truth about the kingdom was the leaven which He deposited in the hearts of a few simple men and women that it might leaven the whole lump of humanity.

To Jesus, the idea of the One Perfect Family was the thought that lay in the mind and purpose of God from all eternity and to which God has devoted His whole being. For the realization of the One Perfect Family, God still lives and perpetually dies in the deaths of His children who are crucified for their fidelity to the kingdom of God.

Jesus thrust this message upon a world that did not heartily welcome it, and backed the message with His whole life. When the chief priests and Pharisees rejected it, He said: "The kingdom of God shall be taken

away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

In the mind of Jesus, nothing was of any account that did not contribute to the building up of this holy family, this everlasting kingdom of God. In behalf of the people about Him, Jesus longed for many things and recognized many needs, but told them that all these things would be added once they heartily accepted the kingdom of God.

Truly, Our Father knows that we have need of many things, but the best of them He can never give us, if we will not seek His kingdom; and the common necessaries of life, in that event, we are likely to steal from one another.

¶ When we shall become fully sensible that a *real* Christian is one who draws upon all the powers of the universe to enable him to become a *good member* of God's family, perfecting His reconciliation, increasing his skill, learning to treat the universe as the furnished home of God and His children—when we have come to realize all this, how contemptible will much of the religion that is in the world appear.

No one is a *better* Christian than he is a *good* member of God's family and no one is *less* a Christian than he is a good member of God's family—regardless of the religious name by which he is known.

¶ I am amazed when I see bewildered people puzzling over what the final and perfect religion is to be. The religion of the Kingdom, the religion of One Perfect Family, is the most perfect religion conceivable, the only

religion to be desired, and the only religion fit to be treasured in the mind and heart of God.

A good God, with a good family, in a good universe, name and describe the highest superlatives among our dreams of the desirable.

That nothing better will ever be conceived, you could safely wager your soul.

We want nothing better, and if anything different were offered us, we would turn it down as inferior instantly. ¶ No one should be left in doubt as to what the supreme aim of life is:

As an idea, it is the idea of the Perfect Family of God, suitably housed and amply equipped to live the life of the spirit.

As a faith, it is the confidence that God and His good children working together will somewhere, sometime, make their idea of the kingdom a gloriously realized fact.

As an experience, it is a consciousness that God has already won us over to the worship of his supreme idea and purpose; that He is successfully purifying us and making us fit to be members of His family; that He has already induced us by His constraining love to volunteer our services in His great cause; that we have begun to know (a) what it means to have all our powers engaged in an enterprise that is worthy of God and His children, and (b) to be blessed and strengthened by a glorious company of friends who see eye to eye with us and our father in this life-giving and family-making enterprise,

that shall yet cause the universe to resound with the triumphant note of victory.

As to what the all-inclusive aim of life is, my heart is at perfect rest. The aim just described is so definite and concrete that I can clearly visualize it and feel perfectly confident while I do so, that if I remain steadfast in my pursuit of this goal, every hidden thing must progressively appear.

¶ My only embarrassment lies in the fact that I still have many weaknesses to overcome, much ignorance to dispel, greater love to acquire, and larger tasks to perform—for which I am poorly equipped.

But I am persuaded that God will not let me go, and that the vision will not leave me; for after every defeat, when I look up, I can still see the great end of life, like an immovable mountain, standing there before me.

Though influences sometimes deflect my will from the magnetic meridian, yet, sooner or later, the lode-star draws it back to the right course; and with contrition of heart, and a new sense of dependence upon God, I again press toward this completely soul-satisfying goal.

Without this definite vision of what everything is for, I am certain that I should flounder in the bog and cry in the dark.

¶ This glorious, definite and all-inclusive answer to the question "For what do God, nature, and all men exist?" is what the world most needs to know with the mind and experience with the heart; for, until then, *no* man has any unifying vision that will bear comparison with it, any

way of understanding the true meaning and worth of anything; until then, the main purpose purposed by different men will be different and they will fight against God and one another.

To define the goal as happiness, righteousness, eternal life, or anything else partial or less than the rounded whole, is like prizing one thread pulled from a beautiful and costly garment above the garment itself.

A noble edifice is worth something more and different from any one or all of the unassembled parts from which it is made; and the Perfect Family of God in their universe home, when once it is realized, will mean much more than any one or all of its constituent parts by themselves.

¶ Put anything you like off by itself in complete and perpetual isolation and it ceases to have value; even of God this would be true.

God is not great simply because He is great; isolate Him in His greatness and He and it would become negligible; He is great because He is the Great Father and can not get along without children to give His fatherhood significance.

When the parts combine and interlace to form a perfect whole, then and then only the meaning and relative value of each part can be properly estimated.

The only perfect whole which is capable of being woven out of this universe is the kingdom of God.

This explains why it will not do to single out God, or man, much less any one of their individual traits or

states as the supreme end of life; but with the picture of the One Perfect Family as the *whole* in our minds every part shines with new luster.

God, the Supreme Being, becomes unutterably awe-inspiring as the center and soul of the whole physical and spiritual universe.

Man becomes sublime as God's offspring; as a member of the God-family who may, if he will, grow to be ever more like his Father and coöperate with Him ever more extensively in achieving the end for which all things exist.

Nature, God's handiwork, becomes thrilling to know and glorious to use in the service of God and man.

¶ The picture of God, man, and nature taken and co-ordinated together into a family, perfect in character and perfectly equipped, reveals a glory that fills the heavens.

To be members of, and have even a small part to play, in such a household, to be a worthy partner—however humble—and have the privilege of loving and being loved, of serving and being served, is a destiny for which anyone, if it were required at his hand, might willingly surrender his earthly all.

This was the vision that sustained Jesus when He went to the cruel cross.

Wonderful it certainly is to see frail man rise up to fulfill such a destiny, but, miracle though it be in the telling, the fact is that for this very goal we were earnestly sought after by a loving Father.

¶ In the light of this answer to the question for what

do God, nature, and all men exist, let us now look at the righteousness of God.

It is no longer a sort of crystallized purity that dartles and dazzles like a cold diamond; something at which we gaze through the telescope of faith for the mere rapture that comes from gazing at something startlingly beautiful but remote.

His righteousness as we can now see, is that of a kind Father who is not above dwelling with His most lowly children in the filth and stench of the world; who seeks every opportunity to bear their sorrows and to forgive their sins; who suffers any abuse they may heap upon Him, with no thought of retaliation; who feels under infinite obligation to His weakest and most sinful child to come to its succor; who sees worth and limitless possibilities in the most degraded; who shirks no duty toward His children because of any suffering it may cause Him; who shuns no hell if His children are determined to pass through it; this is the way that righteousness behaves which is the righteousness of One whose goal for Himself and His children is One Perfect Family.

¶ God is determined that all His children shall know Him and be made to feel the impact of His life upon theirs; it is in order that He may impart His life to us, that all barriers must be burned away.

He does not unfeelingly permit His children to go through the Inferno simply that they may look upon His abstract righteousness when they emerge from the flame.

If His children *will* go to hell, or if cruel-hearted men

force them there, He goes with them that He may be at hand to comfort and forgive when they cry and stretch out their hands to him in their last extremity.

The God whom Jesus revealed does not sit withdrawn on a dazzling white throne to judge the world, but descends into hell to redeem the world.

> O love divine, that stoop'd to share
> Our sharpest pang, our bitt'rest tear,
> On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
> We smile at pain while Thou art near.

¶ That is, God could have no righteousness at all if He were not the true and loving Father of a family.

There is no righteousness to be retained or acquired in isolation, nor is there room for any in a mechanical world.

A key when it fits the lock is right, but a mechanical thing such as a key is never righteous.

A mere mechanical God without children to love, to serve, to forgive, and to transform into worthy members of His Holy Family, such a mechanical being would be no more righteous than the piece of metal with which you unlock your door.

When we squarely face the true goal of family life with God and other men in a universe that is our home, when we taste and see how good the first taste of it is, when we enter a little way into the suffering, redeeming love of God for man and feel His righteous love beginning to burn in our own hearts; when our minds experi-

ence illumination cast upon them by the transcendent hope of bringing all things into perfect accord with His loving purpose, then service, love, righteousness, Eternal Life, happiness—all these familiar terms—glow with a white light as if an electric current were passing through them. ¶ A feeling of dependence upon God is good, and necessary, because we certainly are dependent; a sense of sins forgiven is sweet, for surely we have been crushed beneath a load of sin and guilt; the joy that comes with the awakening of divine love is most welcome, because we have been depressed by its absence—each one of these things is very necessary and very good, but religion includes them all, and more; it is vision, bright as the sun, broad as the universe, high as the heavens, enduring as time.

That vision is a vision of a harmonious universe presided over, filled, and directed by a loving Father; a vision of God's kingdom, of One Perfect Family.

If you are not beckoned on your way daily by this goal, your religious experiences have been too superficial; you have not found the right clue to what it is all about; you have not fully grasped the meaning of Christ's message; you must still be wondering just exactly what the supreme thing is for which we live.

Until we Christians all begin to travel by this beacon, probably we will continue to quarrel and divide over trifles, and the world will be confused and inclined to continue its pursuit of happiness through the acquisition and enjoyment of material things.

4. Shall We Reach the Goal?

¶ We shall never reach a point where no more achievement lies beyond, where there will be no more heights to scale, no more knowledge to gain, no fuller and richer love to possess, no more service to render, no more plans to execute.

Progress will never cease, because its cessation would mean that God's children had exhausted His fullness.

Whatever heights we may reach, those heights will only serve as a starting point for resumption of the upward climb.

Further development and enrichment of the family will forever continue to be both possible and the highest aim of God and His children.

But the lesser goal of the abolition of man's inhumanity to man and disobedience to God, when every man shall have reached the fullness of the stature of Christ, was a thought that filled the Apostle Paul's mind with a glorious hope.

Our immediate concern is how to bring all people and all institutions to make the Great Surrender and submit ungrudgingly to the sway of God's gracious will. This is the specific goal that we are now considering. Shall we reach it?

¶ When we pray that the kingdoms of this world, the kingdoms of selfishness, may become the kingdom of God, we do not limit our hopes to the nations and empires of the present day, nor to the *relatively few* people

who could live on earth in the last days; for much as we hope to see this earth one day entirely redeemed to the Lord, yet that victory alone would be one too small.

The countless billions who had lived through the millenniums preceding our own, and the greater billions who would have lived before the final victory of redeeming the earth, would be gone. Thousands of nations would have been wiped out.

Simply to succeed with those nations living near the end of time, in the enterprise of saving the world, though a marvelous achievement in itself, would, relatively speaking, amount all told to a very small victory.

The people living today whom we are trying to save would have disappeared, and we too should be gone.

Our prayer is that the worldly, rebellious nations that now live, those that have lived, as well as those that shall yet live on this earth may be brought into the kingdom of God.

Can God and His redeemed children working together, win this greater victory?

¶ Even to succeed in bringing us professing Christians into such a relation to God and one another as we have pictured and described is a vast and marvelous undertaking.

Will Christians, even, ever become a perfectly obedient family among themselves? Perfectly devoted to the Father and to one another? Not merely one in mutual admiration, but one in all the exacting relations of life?

Without more redeeming grace and more of the same

kind of discipline that we are having here it is not likely that they will on earth, nor in the life to come.

Death will not carry us to moral perfection.

On first awaking from death, we shall doubtless wonder; but it will take something more than wonder to make us like our Master.

Our character, the minute after death, will be practically the same as it was the minute before we died.

We shall have to face the tasks there that we shirked, or for any reason failed to complete, here.

For, if there were nothing to do there, no alternatives to choose between, no exacting situations to face, no temptations to encounter, then obedience would mean nothing; life itself would mean nothing.

We shall not be good until we are good in a real world.

If we should ever get into some fanciful sphere beyond the real world, there would be no chance of being good in that realm.

¶ Life will always be a trust, and we shall always be responsible to God and to one another for the service we render; for the use we make of the talents and forces with which we have been equipped.

There, as here, perfect obedience to God will cost enough to be worthy of merit.

But when we Christians have come to see and appreciate that a good God, with a good family, in a good universe, equipped with good instruments for the performance of the works of the spirit is our goal; when we have come to love and trust God in everything; when

we have learned to love His will and to feel the sweetness and the power of His presence; when we have become willing to coöperate with one another in the execution of God's plan to the extent of our capacity, then the first great end, a perfectly harmonized family, shall be attained; and life will be unspeakably rich and full.

We have every reason to hope that we shall yet reach this goal; and every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as Jesus Himself was pure.

¶ Since so much is necessary to be done for us Christians after death before we reach the moral and spiritual perfections of Jesus, may we indulge the larger hope? May all men be brought into the One Perfect Family? Or, will there forever remain a vast host of rebels? A kingdom of darkness, a warring kingdom of sin, suffering, and despair?

¶ It must be admitted that the bringing of all men into the kingdom of God is an almost unthinkably difficult undertaking, and that its accomplishment would be a staggering achievement.

And yet, God and His coöperating children can set for themselves no less a goal nor should this larger hope be allowed to lead us into sin and indifference.

The task will cause God and all of us untold suffering if we undertake it *vigorously* and *at once*.

All delay, all indifference, only adds to the difficulties of the problem and multiplies sorrow upon sorrow for God and all His children.

I believe, however, that it can be, and that it will be

accomplished; but if it is, the light of the more abundant life of God must shine through men of the stature of Jesus into the dark places of the heart of many a sinful rebel.

God must find children in whom He can first enter and then go with them to those who are in the valley of the shadow of death and plead with them to make up and be friends with Him.

Though hymns and prayers are good, yet the religion that is to make any headway at this formidable task must mean infinitely more than what is ordinarily meant by worship.

It must cover the entire life, the whole life, both of the individual and of the society engaged in the enterprise of bringing the world into the loving righteous family of God; for until then, we, whom God needs to use as saviours, are ourselves imperfect sons, in need of further redemption.

The Christian himself is but very imperfectly saved until he has become a God-embodied and a God-carrying instrument in the saving of other men to righteousness in all their relations to God and to one another.

¶ There are many reasons for believing that probation will never arbitrarily end for any one; the door will always be open to come in or to go out.

The good will reach a position where they will not want to go out and where their destiny or salvation will be morally certain.

The difficult question to answer with assurance is,

will sinners ever reach a position that is beyond redemption?

I once thought so. There is no doubt but that character, within indefinitely wide limits, does rapidly tend toward a fixed state.

When the prodigal turns his eyes toward the far country, he is hard to stop. He is definitely headed for the pigsty and the husks. His life aflame with riotous living, every step taken by him makes it more certain where he will end up.

Sin in any form is dreadfully likely to run its full course, its aeon—its age-long course. This is true of sin in all its forms.

What hope for the perversely wicked is there then?

I once believed there was none; but I have changed my mind.

All sin must be punished; and the results of that punishment must last as a bitter aftermath long after repentence and forgiveness; and if there is no repentence—forever.

Jesus came to take away our sins and to give us more abundant life, but not to take away our just punishment.

The lost cannot be saved without definite personal help from God through His faithful sons and daughters.

¶ I once learned of a very strange old man within the bounds of my parish whose character was supposed to be unalterably fixed.

One day I called to see him. His wife with great reluctance and apparent fear finally permitted me to see

him; if, as she said, "you are not afraid." She simply pointed to the door of his room.

After rapping on the door, I opened it. There sat an old man in the seventies with long and disheveled hair. His beard was stringy and unkempt. His clothes were filthy. His finger nails had grown around the ends of his fingers like claws.

I gave him my name and the name of my Church.

With one of the ugliest voices I ever heard, a voice that sounded like the low squeal of a pig, he said, "I suppose you have great respect for that bastard son of Mary?"

"Oh," said I, "I have great respect for Jesus, but I did not come in to talk to you about Him. I heard that you were an old man shut in and not well, and I thought how nice it would be if I could run in a minute and do something to break the monotony; to give you something pleasant to think about.

"You and I could have a good time together if you are willing. There is a wonderful difference you know in friends; some make us have such hateful thoughts and feelings while others set us to thinking in channels that awaken kindly feelings."

"My friends have done everything for me, and I do not see what I ever should have done or what good thing I could have become without them. By the way, Jesus taught that you and I are brothers."

¶ If I could have had him in the bath tub for about

fifteen minutes, it would have been easier; nevertheless, I stood by the Gospel.

Though I always was chock full of theology, yet I knew enough to keep that in the background in this case.

I told God to take my body, and use my lips; to make me as far as possible, like Jesus to this old man.

After a few minutes of kindly conversation, the crackling, gutteral voice again sounded: "If ever there was a Christian in the world my mother was one. But my father was an old brute. My mother was a cripple and the mother of seven children. Many a time I've seen my father kick my poor crippled mother all over the floor of the room."

¶ There he was! Telling me these deep family secrets and praising the Christian character of his mother! And the sense of God's love filled my heart as I saw the good kindling into fire within him.

No other call I could have made that day would have brought me such a realization of God's boundless compassion.

The effort it cost me to be a bodily presence for the infinite love of God was an unspeakable privilege.

When I arose to go I said, "I must go now because I do not wish to make you tired—I shall want to call again."

A plaintive appeal entered that old cracked voice as he said, "Come again—won't you? and come soon."

When I opened the door, there stood his wife eavesdropping. She threw up her hands saying, "A miracle!

A miracle! I should have expected him to drive a minister out of the house."

"Yes," I replied. "A miracle of love."

¶ The next time I called, the old man was in bed and tidied up to look very respectable.

After a little more brotherly talk I said, "I am going to pray the prayer which Jesus taught us. I would be glad to have you join me if you will—but not unless you desire."

I began, "Our Father." Never before had it meant so much. Our Father—the father of this old man and me.

And the old man mumbled the prayer through with me to the great joy of our Father in heaven.

This man and his wife came to love me as a brother, and were equally loved by me in return.

When I went home, the light so followed me that I kissed my wife with new fervor and said grace with new meaning as the family gathered about the table for the evening meal.

I had been into the far country and had brought back a prodigal son who had forgotten, if ever he knew, that he had a Father to whom he could return.

He had run a long and dreadful course; his character seemed fixed; he had neither light nor strength to return.

However, the event proved that he could be found and led back to his Father's house.

Sin of every description leads to degradation and de-

spair; but the boundless love of God is ready to descend into the deepest hell whenever it can find one of His children that is willing to go with Him there.

It is my fondest hope that we may have a chance in the future life to do this glorious work which we have so largely and so shamefully neglected on earth.

It will be no small task, but I am compelled to believe that when we are more saved ourselves, we shall be able to bring all God's children into the fold.

At least, we may believe that all will be brought in if it is possible.

5. Is the Goal of Life Worth the Cost of the Journey?

¶ The goal which is set before us is worth God, man, and the universe; it is worth all these in their most perfect, harmonious relations.

That is the limit; no greater value is conceivable.

It is sometimes said of selfish, grasping people that they want "the earth"; but the Christian may actually possess the universe; its Maker and its inhabitants.

"All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

If that is not a goal that offers a prize of sufficient value, then there is nothing more to be said.

If one cannot be aroused to strive for such a prize, he must be left among the dead and forgotten.

¶ The cost of the journey need not frighten us.

If there are hardships, there are proportionate joys. If there are fears, there is "a peace that passeth all understanding."

The reward is not infinitely remote; one does not have to run the whole race before he receives his first portion of the prize. Though the sky is high, yet it begins at the ground; and though the goal stretches into eternity, yet it begins at our feet.

We may, as individuals, catch hold of the prize this minute, and get a firmer grasp upon it every minute that we grow "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

We may hold God in loving hearts now, we may be rich in our human friendships now, we may commence using the things about us to perform the works of the spirit now; we may do all these things in a fuller sense tomorrow—the next day, and forever.

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What and why is man ?

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